The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. LX NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1929 NUMBER 781

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The Week

PRESIDENT HOOVER'S Armistice Day address makes one highly important concrete proposal, which we discuss in an article on another page. Aside from this suggestion, that food-ships should be exempt from blockade in time of war, his speech is chiefly notable for its fine general spirit and temper. They are in the strongest possible contrast to Mr. Coolidge's peevish, jingoistic declaration on the same occasion one year ago; indeed, if Mr. Hoover, as a private citizen, had talked during 1917 or 1918 as he did last Monday, he would probably have gone to jail, and the same views expressed at any time during the first three or four years after the War would have brought down upon him general excoriation. He reiterated the willingness of the United States to reduce its armament as far as any other power is willing to go; recognized the necessity of machinery to implement the Kellogg Pact; urged the codification of international law, and again endorsed the project for American participation in the World Court. He declared it is the American policy not to agree to the use of force, even in the interest of peace, as is provided by the League Covenant. America will rely upon public opinion, and public opinion only, for pressure upon a nation which, after all efforts at conciliation and adjudication, takes up arms and goes to war. If in all this there is nothing that is new, it is nevertheless an admirable restatement of a policy with which, in its major outlines, most good Americans will find themselves in hearty agreement.

THE past few days have seen two fresh examples of Ramsay MacDonald's genius for changing the international atmosphere. By obtaining the consent of the House of Commons to a resumption of diplomatic relations, he has again brought Russia and Great Britain together, after they had drifted far apart during the regime of the late Conservative government in London. For all practical purposes, Anglo-Russian relations now go back to their status when the first Labor government fell, five years ago. In regard to India, he has obtained an astonishing change of attitude on the part of all but the bitter-end Indian advocates of complete independence. Lord Irwin, the Viceroy, speaking on behalf of the Government, has promised that the ultimate objective for India is full dominion status. Other British spokesmen for twelve years past have talked about "responsible government," but have never precisely defined the meaning of that term. Perhaps even more important than this new declaration is the announcement that after the Simon Commission report has been made public next year, a conference will be called in which leading Englishmen, spokesmen for British India, and representatives of the native states, will all take part. The more sober and responsible of the Indian leaders have long desired such a conference, which was demanded by formal resolution of the National Congress as long ago as 1924. Every realistic friend of India recognizes that there are problems of the greatest difficulty to be solved before even dominion status is practicable; but for the first time, an atmosphere has been created in which Englishmen and Indians can sit down together and try to work out the solution to these problems. Obviously, that is an achievement of the very greatest importance.

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ANNOUNCEMENT by the American Bankers' Association that for the first time in many years, savings deposits were reduced during the year ending June 29, 1929, instead of being increased, tells a story whose meaning it is highly important to unravel. In the three previous years, savings deposits had increased at the rate of anywhere from $1,400,000,000 to $2,300,000,000 a year. But last year they actually fell off by nearly $200,000,000. No doubt the use of savings for speculation in the stock market accounts for a good share of the difference. If we assume that this is the major reason, it would indicate that a great many small speculators lost a great deal of money in the recent crash. But if this is the case, savings deposits ought to begin to mount again, with beneficial results in the bond and mortgage markets, and a corresponding stimulus to building construction. If, however, any large part of the reduction was due to a failure of people to save at all, on account of having mortgaged their entire incomes in instalment payments, the outlook is not so hopeful. For that would mean that there can be little further expansion in the industries dependent for their sales on instalment financing, unless wages and salaries and farm-incomes should be greatly increased. And it would mean a continued shortage of new money for first mortgages.

THE ONLY result of the New York City election worthy of comment was the heavy vote received by Norman Thomas, the Socialist candidate. Tammany, as was expected, was swept into office by a large plurality, holding about its customary share of the vote. The Republicans lost heavily (in percentage) to the Socialists, though it is quite conceivable that many of the large number who registered do not ordinarily vote in mayoralty elections, and did so this time only to support Mr. Thomas. As a result of the 174,000 votes cast for the head of their ticket, the Socialists are greatly encouraged, and are making plans for alliance with local Independent and Progressive forces, in order to build up a vigorous party which may some day offer real competition to the Democratic as well as the Republican machine. It is true, of course, that the immediate chances of such a group are not so bright as they may look on the surface. Many Republicans voted for Mr. Thomas merely as a protest against Mr. LaGuardia, and for reasons which would cause them to desert the Socialist ticket promptly if they thought there were any chance of its being successful. Mr. Thomas's percentage of the total vote was nowhere near so large as was Mr. Hillquit's in 1917. Nevertheless, it is good practical politics to take advantage of a lucky stroke and a popular personality in order to build an organization which may do better in the future.

WHAT looks like important new evidence in the Mooney case has just been unearthed. Four persons have come forward to say that one Lewis Smith confessed on his deathbed, in 1922, that he had committed the crime for which Mooney and Billings are now serving life sentences in California prisons. The witnesses are Smith's brother and sister and her son, and Frank O. Stevens, an inmate of the National Military Home at Dayton, Ohio. Lewis Smith was evidently the kind of man who might have committed the crime to which he confessed; and he told a detailed story of what he did. The fact that his sister's present recollection of this story is incorrect in some details does not necessarily invalidate it. As careful and complete an investigation should be made as is possible in view of the lapse of time.

MEANWHILE, action on Mooney's appeal for a pardon, now before Governor Young of California, should not be delayed because of the new turn of affairs. It is not necessary to show that Smith was guilty in order to prove that Mooney did not have a fair trial, and that there was not one shred of unprejudiced evidence against him. This has been known for years; the trial judge, the police officers who prepared the case, nine of the ten living jurors, have all united in asking that Mooney be set free. For a decade, successive governors of California have lacked the courage to act on his behalf, in the face of the strong anti-radical sentiment in that state. But this anti-radicalism has itself abated in the past few years. There was never any legitimate reason why Mooney should not be freed; there is now not even the lamest excuse.

SOUTHERN textile mill owners who are preparing for a long siege to prevent the unionization of their employees, which might force them to raise wages and reduce hours, must have a difficult time to account for what is going on at the Naumkeag Mills in Salem, Mass. This is one of the most successful concerns in the industry, making the widely known Pequot sheets and pillow-cases. Yet it recognizes the union, pays union wages and works union hours. Speaking at a recent New England Labor Congress in Worcester, Mr. William O'Connell of the United Textile Workers is quoted by The Labor Bureau, Inc., as follows:

> The operators have coöperated with the management in every way by endeavoring to turn out the best quality and maximum quantity of goods. If the textile manufacturers would take their cue from what has been done and what is being done by the manufacturers of Pequot sheeting goods we should hear much less of troubles in the textile industry. True success can only come from full coöperation of both sides, one with another. This the workers have offered and this the manufacturers have been wise enough in this case to recognize and embrace.

While Mr. G. Foster Smith, President of the Naumkeag Company, sent a letter to the Congress, in which he said:

> . . . The union employees of the Naumkeag are rendering a very great service to industry, and especially

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> to the textile industry, in the exceptionally fine attitude they have manifested in this matter, and I believe industrial peace will come about only through such efforts as this.

As the Labor Bureau remarks, there is every reason why the Southern employees should at present look upon their employers as enemies, but it is difficult to understand why these employers should continue to believe in the virtue of long hours, low wages and the non-union shop, when they have before them such examples of union-management coöperation as the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company, the successful men's clothing manufacturers, and the Naumkeag Mills.

THE action of the Milwaukee school authorities in the case of Joel Schneider, youthful Communist, brings up some interesting questions. The lad had organized a branch of the Young Pioneers, junior Communist society, in the Roosevelt high school. For this, the principal asked him to go to another high school; declining, Joel was transferred over his protest to that other school, a technical one. Now the questions: Why the transfer? Did the school authorities want a branch of the Young Pioneers formed in the technical high school, too, as being peculiarly suited to boys about to enter the mechanical trades? Or did they simply work by indirection to make Joel quit school on his own responsibility? Assuming the latter, why did they want him to quit school? Did they regard the public school system as shutting out students holding economic beliefs with which they do not agree; and if so, what about religious or political or ethical beliefs to which they also object? Why did they not keep this lad within the school system and convert him—did the principal, with all his superior age and wisdom, have no arguments to show an immature boy the error of his ways? Did he think the principal of the technical school could do a better job of converting than he could? Or was he afraid, perhaps, of himself being converted? If the school authorities were apprehensive about the spreading of Joel's doctrines among his fellow-students, why did they not ably refute those doctrines? Was it not their duty to clarify their students' minds, rather than to make Joel a martyr? What is the matter with school authorities, anyhow, that they seem afraid to let an idea fight its way in the arena of ideas? If they think they see a ghost, why do they try to forget it by turning their backs?

WHILE the trials of six deputy sheriffs and 113 striking mill hands were about to open in Marion, N. C.; while the widows and mothers of the slain strikers were being ejected from their houses; while the National Guardsmen were marching away, leaving the vicinity in charge of Sheriff Adkins and his trigger-minded deputies, a religious controversy was suddenly injected into the situation. An indeterminate number of strikers—some accounts say twelve or fifteen and others a hundred—were dropped without warning from the rolls of the East Marion Missionary Baptist Church. Both the Rev. S. J. McAlbee, its pastor, and A. R. Flack, the chairman of the board of deacons, are employed by the Marion Manufacturing Company, where the strike that cost six lives is still in progress. The dismissed members of the church belong to the United Textile Union, which is affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. It now seems that owing to public indignation, the letters of dismissal have been temporarily withdrawn, and that the workers will be given a formal trial before the congregation. Whatever the outcome of this trial, it will affect the future both of the Southern labor movement and of the Southern churches.

WE ARE informed that many of these churches, like the villages in which they stand, are the property of the textile mills. The ministers' salaries are in many cases paid directly by the mill owners. It is easy to understand why such ministers are apt to defend the economic interests of the men on whom their livelihood depends, even at the cost of opposing the economic interests of their congregations. However, the churches cannot fail to suffer from such a situation. If the strikers, most of them devout Methodists or Baptists, are to be evicted from "company" churches, just as they are evicted from company houses and refused credit in company stores, will they surrender their membership in the union or their membership in the church? And, if the churches are content to be company organizations, mere departments of the textile mills, can they retain their present influence in the South?

Moses among the Jackasses

THE western section of the Republican party might not be incensed at Senator Moses for calling its Senators "sons of wild jackasses" if it did not suspect, with good reason, that Moses and his supporters expect the western farmers to be tame and sterile mules, working on a minimum ration for the greater wealth and glory of the industrial East. The well named Grundy of Pennsylvania had said as much, when he objected to the senatorial representation given the West by the Constitution, on the ground that it let the less important part of the country interfere with the plans of the more important part. Indiscreet phrases in political crises have a way of precipitating action. Much of the strength of the Non-Partisan League, which did the spade-work for the subsequent farmer-labor parties and the eventual La Follette revolt, was derived from the advice given protesting farmers to "go home and slop the hogs."

Division of congressional forces between Republican standpatters on the one hand, and Republican insurgents plus Democrats on the other, is now a long-established tradition, and is to be seen in

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nearly every session of the national legislature. Twice in this century it has led to splits in the Republican ranks during presidential elections, and attempts to form a new party. In the present session, the Democratic-Progressive coalition has solidified its forces as rarely before, and it is in undisputed control of the Senate. The issue on which it opposes the regulars—the relative advantage which the agricultural and the industrial regions are to gain from tariff revision—has been exceedingly well dramatized. From Grundy and Bingham the country has learned how manufacturers use political machinery to get tariff favors. The petulance of Moses, it would seem, was the only thing lacking to furnish the emotional spark to the charge of dynamite which lay ready to split off another new party movement.

Our Washington correspondent in this issue of The New Republic furnishes some reasons, culled from the political situation itself, why such an eventuality now seems unlikely. Chief among these is that Mr. Hoover himself is not a President who would aggravate the breach. He is not a reactionary, hand-in-glove with the Republican regulars, as were Taft and Coolidge. But there are, it seems to us, still more fundamental and economic reasons why little of permanent significance can be built on the present controversy, important as it is likely to be in the congressional fortunes of this administration.

Moses and Smoot, Grundy and Bingham, are as they appear in a tariff fight, typical representatives of the sort of industry which has customarily ruled the Republican party in the past. If to follow their lead were to mean real economic advantage for "the industrial East," their tariff stand-pattism would undoubtedly be enduring and dominant. It would be necessary for industry to split from the farmer on this issue, necessary for this division to be permanently represented on the political stage. But the sort of industry which these gentlemen serve is curiously unlike the sort of industry for which, justly or unjustly, the United States has become celebrated since the War. What has assiduous seeking of tariff favors from the government to do with the triumphs of mass production, the lowering of costs, the reduction of prices, the elimination of waste, the enlargement of home markets, the successful competition abroad, of which we have heard so much? As a matter of fact, the two attitudes are diametrically opposed. Henry Ford could not apply to Congress for a tariff which would enable him to charge higher prices, at the same time that he boasts of his achievement in increasing his sales by continually reducing prices.

As a matter of fact, he does not. The automobile industry is not agitating for more protection; it allows reduced duties, and stands to lose much from a protective policy. A similar tariff attitude now characterizes many other powerful industrial forces in the country. The great electric utilities could not suffer from foreign competition, and are not using their batteries of publicity to favor the tariff. The railroads are in the same boat. Even some of those powerful industries which may profit from protection, but do not really need it, seem to be half-hearted in their support of the present bill; they cannot successfully pretend that it is a matter of life and death to them. Steel has concerned itself little, this time, with any effort to raise duties on steel products; what it wanted most was a reduction of the duty on manganese, which, by an irony of fate, the embattled farmers' representatives denied to it on account of an infant industry in their own states. General Electric is not howling for protection. The great investment bankers are not deeply concerned about protecting the domestic market from imports; they are far more interested in fostering foreign loans and foreign trade.

The Old Guard is really working in the interests of an anachronistic type of industry. The small fry, the lame and the halt, the unprogressive, the unrealistic and the tight-minded—these are the types of manufacturers who now charge into the tariff fray with all the fervor of 1896. When the tariff is discussed, we hear most, not from the leaders of industrial America whose achievements have been the subject of world publicity, but from the Connecticut manufacturers, from the cotton textile mills—from the low-wage sectors, from those whose pleas sound more like an appeal for deserving charity than like the triumphant policy of successful industry. Indeed, it is extremely likely that the present tariff movements originated, not so much in the minds of the industrialists as in those of the old-line politicians. The agitation about the tariff is a tried and true method of shaking the tambourine for campaign contributions, of raising voices in a party hymn to rout the Democratic devil. The Republican politicians did it in 1928 because they could not think of anything better and newer. Now they are trying to make good, but though they put up a bold front, they are suffering from a gnawing doubt and a weakening morale. Somehow the slogans do not ring as they used to. The Old Guard has not died, but it has surrendered.

We do not mean to minimize the extent and power of the anachronistic type of industry in the United States. The leaders who have progressed beyond the type have been somewhat over-advertised. Many manufacturers who really stand to gain nothing from protection are still so traditionally minded that they accept it as an article of faith. But the present political conflict has revealed pretty clearly that the substance of the protectionist religion is vanishing; the forms may still be observed, but its vital force is evaporated. The agricultural West is not, on this issue, really arrayed against the industrial East. It is arrayed against a group of routine politicians and lobbyists, whose visible ineptitudes during the present struggle have made them distinctly less serviceable to the ruling industrial powers who care about other matters.

To say this is not to say that agriculture and in-

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dustry will be united on all questions, or that there will be nothing in national politics for a sincerely progressive group to accomplish. The historic cleavage will doubtless persist, and controversies on future issues may be less like a sham battle. But in a real battle there would have to be a more fundamental division of forces than the mere sifting out of existing Democratic and Republican members of Congress into two non-partisan camps. There would have to be a new program, relevant to modern conditions, not a revival of a stale platitude like the tariff. There would have to be a difference in principle, not merely a squabble as to which part of the country ought to receive the larger share of the same hand-out. If the Old Guard had won with a high tariff all along the line, there might have been a chance for the Democrats to ride in on the reaction against it. But if there is no new law, or if the Progressive-Democratic coalition succeeds in getting a modified version of the law it wants, the tariff issue is likely to be forgotten in a few months, and new lines of division will have to be drawn.

Food-Ships and the Blockade

MR. HOOVER'S suggestion, in his Armistice Day address, that ships carrying food should be exempt from interference during war time, is a proposal which is thoroughly characteristic of him. It is, that is to say, concrete; it aims at a limited objective which is not impossible of attainment, and it carries implications which are considerably more important than at first appear. This is Mr. Hoover at his best, and we turn with relief to this picture of him, after contemplating his unhappy misadventures among the members of the Senate in trying to obtain enactment of a tariff bill in which, it is obvious, he has never fully believed.

There are, of course, two aspects under which the plan about the food ships should be considered. One of these is its present international significance, and the other, the likelihood that it could be maintained in case of armed conflict. Anyone familiar with the history of the War knows what an important factor in her policy was Great Britain's fear of a successful submarine blockade—a fear which was well justified by the course of events, since there was a period of several months when it looked as though Germany would be able to starve her out. Those who were behind the scenes are also well aware of the international difficulties which were created by Great Britain's own blockade directed against the Central Powers, a blockade from which the United States was one of the chief sufferers. So serious was the conflict between America and the Allies on this subject, in the first years of the War, that only the most inept diplomacy by the Germans finally caused the breach to be healed and brought us into the conflict against them.

An agreement that food-ships should be exempt from seizure, as are hospital-ships, would immediately alter the whole character of the naval problem. The British naval authorities would lose their most powerful argument in favor of maintaining a fleet of the present size, or anything like it. The position of the United States would also be changed, and in the same direction. Mr. Hoover points out that about 25 percent of the world's ocean-borne traffic consists of foodstuffs, and that they constitute "a much more important portion of the trade likely to be interfered with by a blockade." While our naval men are too polite to say so, their chief reason for demanding a strong navy is to enforce our right to continue our shipping, in any future war in which the United States is a neutral and Great Britain a belligerent. If a large part of this shipping were to be exempt from interference, by international agreement, the argument for a great American fleet would be much weakened. The same would be true regarding France: the French strength is in submarines, and these are intended, as everyone knows, for possible use in a starvation-blockade against Great Britain. If they could not be employed for that purpose, there would no longer be much reason for their existence. The tension in the Mediterranean would be similarly lessened.

Considered in terms of the present international situation, then, there is much to commend Mr. Hoover's suggestion. There is perhaps less to be said for it when we attempt to prophesy as to its probable enforcement in case war should break out. It comes under the head of humanitarian attempts to make future conflict less terrible, like the efforts to prohibit poison gas, the submarine, dropping bombs on civilians, poisoning wells, the release of disease germs, etc. Such efforts in the past have always been unavailing and there is no reason to be any more optimistic about them in the future. In any war, the nation which is fighting for life, with its back to the wall, is likely to break any humanitarian agreement if by doing so it can increase the chance of victory. President Hoover, who probably knows more about famine than anyone else, feels that we "should remove starvation of women and children from the weapons of warfare." One must applaud his feeling; yet we cannot forget how gleefully good American men and women read reports of starvation in Germany during 1917 and 1918, nor how bitter and numerous were the protests, long after the Armistice, when Mr. Hoover undertook to feed the German children.

Such discussion, however, is academic. War is the ultimate calamity, and if it should occur again, the starvation of non-combattants will be only one more detail in an epic of horror. In the meantime, Mr. Hoover's proposal has much to commend it. It would not solve the difficult question of the freedom of the seas; but it would go a long way in that direction, and it would not interfere with further attempts at the recodification of sea law in the light of the Kellogg Pact. It may be argued that in view of the likelihood that the agreement would break

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down in wartime, the naval men would be able to insist that it should be disregarded in times of peace, but this would not necessarily follow. The whole effort to build up navies is based on imaginary objectives in any event; it is just as easy for Great Britain and America to agree upon parity between navies at a point which assumes the exemption of food-ships as at one which does not. What is needed is a good argument against the militarists' grandiose ideas, and this the Hoover plan provides. It can be taken for granted, we think, that the idea was discussed, at least informally, between the President and the Prime Minister during Mr. MacDonald's recent visit; if it had not, Mr. Hoover certainly would not put it forth so vigorously now. While it is not yet on the agenda of the forthcoming naval conference, there is no reason why it should not be discussed both before and during that meeting. We hope that it will be, and that no nation, for the sake of immediate partisan advantage, will put obstacles in the way of such a decided step toward peace.

Realism in Reform

THE National Consumers' League, which is celebrating its thirtieth birthday this week, is an educational movement based on a simple and effective idea—that the consuming public is largely responsible for the conditions under which goods are manufactured and distributed. By organizing consumers and by arousing their interest in the lives of shop girls and factory hands, the League has brought a double pressure to bear on employers, a pressure partly economic, but chiefly that of public opinion. In this way it has consistently endeavored to improve the position of workers in general and of women and children in particular.

In 1899, when the Consumers' League was organized, conditions in most American industries were deplorable. Less than a dozen states were seriously attempting to regulate or prohibit the employment of children in factories, mines, stores, or in the streets. Boys of seven and eight worked all night as blowers' "dogs" in the glass works or as water boys in the steel mills. In most of the industrial states, women could be employed for an unlimited number of hours, all night, and seven days a week, and they were paid as little as fifty cents a day.

Faced by these conditions, the Consumers' League might have made a brave and ineffectual attack on our industrial system as a whole. Instead it concentrated on one industry, that of garment making, and on one branch of that industry, the manufacture of women's and children's stitched cotton underwear. By fixing a minimum standard of working conditions, by attaching its own label to goods made in factories which complied with this standard, and finally by appealing to the public in general, the Consumers' League effected a vast improvement in this one department of manufacturing. Then, with this record of achievement, it proceeded to a general attack on sweat-shops all over the country.

We have treated this first campaign at some length because it is typical of the activities of the Consumers' League. Always, under the wise direction of Mrs. Florence Kelley, its General Secretary since the beginning, it has moved toward its ideal aims by practical and realistic methods. Almost always it has begun by choosing limited objectives, and then, after attaining them, has broadened the scope of its activities—like an army which, after driving a spearhead into the enemy lines, attacks on both sides of it to produce a general retreat.

In these broader aims, the Consumers' League has often been unsuccessful. It met with a serious defeat when the Child Labor Amendment was rejected by the states, and with a second defeat when the Supreme Court, by the Sutherland decision, held the District of Columbia minimum-wage law for women to be unconstitutional. Until this decision, which has been widely attacked by jurists, can be reversed, the League is working under a handicap. However, it has recently opened a campaign in favor of minimum-wage laws for minors, a form of legislation which is apparently unaffected by the Sutherland decision. And it is continuing its support of child-labor laws in the separate states.

In spite of major defeats in the perpetual warfare for better working conditions, the Consumers' League has continued to gain its more limited objectives. It has helped to keep messenger boys and newsboys off the streets at night. It has campaigned with much success against night work by women in factories and restaurants. In 1927 and 1928 it investigated working conditions in the New York candy factories, and as a result effected a marked improvement in the industry as a whole. At present much of its activity is centered upon the Southern textile mills. Thus, the specific aims of the National Consumers' League have changed with the changing times, but its general aims remain the same. The New Republic congratulates the League for its past achievements, and wishes for it another thirty years of fruitful life.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1929, IN THE U. S., BY THE NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK
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RATES: SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN, FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS: FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR.

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Conference and Compromise

THE HABIT of holding conferences, long endemic among Anglo-Saxons, is rapidly becoming a world custom. Like phonographs, Fords, movies and radios, the conference idea promises to encompass the earth. There may be no relation between the penetration of mechanical conveniences and the spread of conferences, but it is to be noted that there are marked similarities: both are presumably designed to perform services for individuals, and each expands by easy modes of imitation. "Let's buy a radio" and "Let's hold a conference" may not spring from the same psychic sources, but they lead to similar consequences. The first and perhaps most significant of these consequences is a simple faith in the substitutional value of the device as a thing in itself. Conferences, not to mention radios and movies, may be good in and of themselves, but they may also be delusions, escapes, time-wasters.

Europe witnessed an epidemic of international conferences during the past summer. Not all of them, obviously, came to my attention, but I was urged to attend six and was acually present at three, exclusive of the Assembly of the League of Nations. Everywhere one went in Europe one collided with a conference, or with persons who had just come from or were hurrying to one. In this fortuitous but inescapable manner, I learned about a score of other conferences which, thank Heaven, I was not obliged to attend. These gatherings were roughly classifiable into three groups: first, those consisting of reformers and radicals who went about their conference business with an air of grim, religious zeal; second, those consisting of professional persons who made a pretense of earnestness, but were unable to conceal their holiday spirit; and third, those consisting of official representatives of various governments summoned ostensibly to solve grave problems of state. All of these assemblies appeared to have two things in common: they were international in scope and sentiment, and they were equally unaware of the need of a valid conference method.

There is probably some excuse for those professionals, educators mostly, who confuse the idea of taking a holiday in Europe with that of holding a conference. If they foregather in a pleasant spot and rush furiously about in a conscientious attempt to attend at least a few sessions, and spend most of their time sightseeing, one forgives them. Why they seem to need the moral backing of a conference in order to take a holiday remains a mystery. They certainly need the holiday.

The purpose of a conference, patently, is to confer: that is, to exchange knowledge and experience relating to specific problems. But this is precisely what one rarely encounters in these international gatherings. There were prodigious numbers of learned papers read at audiences, and there was great ado about translating. The ever-present coterie of the excessively serious filled their notebooks with much wisdom. One watched their bowed heads over swiftly moving pencils, or their rapt attention when one of the doctors expounded strange psychological doctrines emanating from Vienna, Berlin or Zurich, with a wistful sadness. Two types of escape were here vividly manifest; the escape from real intellectual work, and from something within the self. Always one wished these conferees could learn to take their holidays undiluted.

In those other conferences where realistic international issues were at stake, I entertained misgivings of another sort. It slowly dawned upon me that these international gatherings were dominated by a characteristic European pattern of mind. The figure of Mr. Snowden at the Hague came to be an overwhelming symbol of this pattern. There he stood during those insufferably hot days, implacable, relentless, heroic. But he stood not alone: all England seemed to have rallied to his support, even the die-hards of the opposition. They knew next to nothing concerning the technical details underlying the issue of reparations, but this they knew: England had a champion, a man who dared to defy the world, and especially France and Italy. Did they expect him to win a real victory? Not at all; they knew that his show of implacability was merely an aspect of the role he was playing. It was the stand he had taken and his mode of taking it which rallied England behind the doughty Minister of the Exchequer. Beyond this they expected one result and one only: that Mr. Snowden would compromise when the proper time arrived. And this is the term which defines the attitude of the European conferee: *compromise.*

What is the nature of a compromise? What mood does the potentiality of compromise engender? What does the compromising habit contribute to the configuration of an emerging problem? To what degree does imminent compromise tend to destroy the true representativeness of the conferee? How much of the European situation is explainable in terms of the compromise concept of life? These were the types of questions which agitated my mind during the first fortnight of the sessions of the Tenth Assembly of the League of Nations. In the informal discussions, luncheons, dinners, committee meetings, and in the Assembly itself, the compromise pattern revealed itself in a variety of forms; where it was not explicitly in the foreground, it could readily be detected in the background of all

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negotiations. Fine words were spoken by Briand, MacDonald, Henderson, Stresemann and others in the general sessions of the Assembly, words which caused even the sceptical to respond with enthusiasm. But, in the smaller committees where the actual work was performed, one encountered very little behavior which seemed consonant with the utterances of the rostrum. And when one descended still lower to those innumerable drawing-room discussions which have become so important in the life of Geneva, it became apparent that the unities of public expression bore very little relation to actual beliefs and opinions.

This, then, is the first element involved in the nature of compromise: it causes conferees to behave differently on several levels of intercourse. The words which they speak for home consumption are not those which they use in the small committee; in turn, the words they use in committees are not those employed in informal, personal discourse. This variability in outward conduct is the natural concomitant of compromise. The compromiser expects to change fronts, and he expects his fellow conferees to change also, but none of them expects the situation to change. Relativity in conduct with corresponding rigidity in the situation involved means that creative action is excluded. The compromiser always asks for more than he expects and is prepared to take less than he deserves. Consequently, he falsifies the situation at the outset. Discussion hinges upon how much of this and how much of that, while the actual underlying situation remains unexplored, fixed. The mood of the potential compromiser is always determined by thoughts of how much he can afford to degrade himself by giving in at one point in order to secure a gain at another. He begins negotiations by making claims; ensuing discussion then revolves about these demands, not about the relevant situation. The closing phase of such a conference is usually marked by insincere expressions of good will, apologies and atonements. Mr. Snowden, for example, wanted everyone to understand the depth of his affection for his colleagues at the Hague, and they in turn hurried to tell the world how much they loved Mr. Snowden. All of which left the fundamental situation, reparations, very nearly where it was before the conference began.

The above criticisms are not wholly academic, nor do they imply a counsel of perfection. If, as now seems likely, world problems are to be increasingly referred to committees, conferences and assemblies, it becomes legitimate and practical to ask whether or not fruitful results may be expected from this procedure. Conferences which result in nothing better than compromises may merely pile up repressions. Modern Europe is in one sense the result of this process.

Opportunity for experimentation lies waiting. A new world situation does exist. The one unmistakable sign of the times is negative; it is based upon an overwhelming conviction that warfare is a futile method for dealing with international problems. The World Court, the League of Nations, the impending naval conference, these are samples of social substitutes for war. How may these various pieces of social machinery become positive, creative instruments of peace? The essence of warfare is strategy and technical invention, whereas the essence of conference is intelligence and social invention. Science has in the past served the war-makers; it should now be called to the service of the peace-builders. Holding conferences is a form of social behavior which may be reduced to orderly terms. Psychologists, sociologists and educators should be called upon to conduct the necessary researches. The newly-acquired prestige of the League of Nations might profitably be turned to account in the interest of conference method. In short, conference procedure should become the object of scientific study and experimentation. Faulty social functioning, as a problem for the social scientist, is fully as valid as imperfect physiological functioning is to the medical scientist. As the world contracts, becomes more and more interdependent, tends toward widening circles of collective action and comes increasingly under the dominance of science and the technologies, it becomes obvious that the need for adequate social controls will soon be imperative. "The world," writes Whitehead, "is now faced with a self-evolving system, which it cannot stop. . . . The problem is *not how to produce great men, but how to produce great societies.*" The great society of the future is latent in committees, conferences, assemblies—not in these entities themselves, but rather in the validity of the method which they utilize for performing their tasks.

EDUARD C. LINDEMAN.

Happy Is He . . .

Happy is he who lies awake
Because of grief that hems him round,
For he shall hear, as I have heard,
The first mild clamor of a bird
That dares the day with sound.

The soft, the gay, aggressive note!
Resolute ripple from a tree
Suddenly green, as well I know
Who see the pale sky paler grow:
Dawn is about to be.

Dawn is to be and birds to be;
There is no room for anything
Save dawn and birds in all the sky.
Blessèd is he, thrice-blessèd I,
To share this happening.

Sleeping is good and dreams are good,
And a wide, white bed for their fickle sake;
But a bird at dawn in a greening tree,
And the sound of its fluty filigree,
Is worth the night awake.

LEONORA SPEYER.

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The International Bank[1]

I

THE Young Plan experts not only had to decide upon the definite task to be given Germany, but upon the machinery of administration which was to replace the bodies set up under the Dawes Plan to collect and transfer German payments. Some agency had to have charge of issuing the bonds which would cover the commercialized part of the debt. Some agency had to receive the German payments, and had to have continuous oversight, for many years, over the exchange transactions involved in converting German marks into francs, pounds, etc. If this agency was to be "non-political," it must not be controlled directly by the governments concerned. It would have to be expert in international finance; it would have to be allowed some scope for exercising its expertness. There was only one logical solution of this puzzle. The agency must be a bank, run by bankers. No existing bank would do, because all existing banks were closely associated with specific countries. An international bank was necessary. And its directors must not be appointed by governments. The only other bodies important enough to appoint them were, of course, the central banks of the several nations.[2] These central banks are semi-public institutions, expert and independent in most matters, although ultimately responsible to their governments.

Once the idea was seized that there must be a bank, and that it must be not only international, but a common meeting ground for the governors of the central banks, imagination began to play. Banks have many sorts of functions and powers. Central banks in particular have numerous potentialities for influence and control over large economic affairs. A bank might be more than a mere automatic machine for collecting and handing over reparation payments. It might take action which would, in one way or another, make it easier for Germany to pay. In case Germany could not pay, or could not pay so much as was anticipated, it might soften the blow and facilitate adjustments. Furthermore, an international bank might play a large and wholesome part in world finance, entirely aside from its reparation duties. It might perform the same function for the war debts of the Allies which it performed for the reparation debt. It might become a permanent institution, acting on a world scale much as the existing central banks act within the nations. If it did anything of this sort, it would be far more important than any mere reparation agency. That some of the Young experts expected it to assume this kind of significance, we learned from a statement by Mr. Owen D. Young himself.

This pleasant conception has not so far been realized with the ease and beauty of a Venus rising from the sea. There was controversy about it the moment the experts' ideas became known. The organizing committee of the bank has not yet been able to agree on all the controversial points. The official delegates of the powers have still to meet at the Hague and accept a completed plan. That they will accept some kind of international bank is almost certain, unless the whole of the Young Plan is to be scrapped, because there seems to be no other way safely to make a "final" settlement, operated by "non-political" authorities. In describing the bank, we must rely chiefly upon the specifications given it in the Young report, but we must remember that these specifications are likely to be somewhat altered. And the alterations are likely to be in the direction of limiting the bank's power.

II

What are the reparations duties of the Bank for International Settlements? It is, first, a trustee of the creditor countries for the German annuities. Germany deposits with it certificates of indebtedness for what she owes. On these certificates are two coupons for each year of the period during which payments are to be made. One of these coupons represents the non-postponable annuity, the other, the postponable annuity. The coupons are torn off at the proper time and deposited to the credit of governments or persons who are entitled to them. All this, and much more in the way of paper formalities, does not, of course, change in the least the underlying realities of the situation; it simply gives them a familiar financial clothing so that they will seem like routine business matters.

Next, the bank may require the issuance of German bonds, for general public sale, up to an amount representing the capitalization of the non-postponable annuities. The proceeds from the sale of these bonds it will deliver to the several Allied governments, according to a plan of division agreed to at The Hague. (France gets the lion's share, although Mr. Snowden's determined stand somewhat altered in Britain's favor the sharing recommended by the Young report.) As the non-postponable annuities are remitted to the bank by Germany, they

[1] This is the third and last of a series of articles on the Young Plan and the reparations question in general.

[2] The Federal Reserve Bank of New York will not be formally represented on the board of the International Bank, on account of the reluctance of the United States government to participate, even indirectly, in any reparation activities. The American directors, chosen by the central banks of the other nations, will, however, informally represent the Federal Reserve interests.

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will be partly paid out as interest on the bonds, and partly accumulated for amortizing them, so that the bonds may all be retired by the end of the thirty-seven-year term. Thus the purchasers of the bonds will furnish the cash wherewith to pay a substantial portion of the reparation debt. In case bonds are not sold up to the full amount permissible, that part of the non-postponable annuities not required for interest and amortization will be directly credited to the accounts of the Allied governments.

There is some doubt as to the amount of choice the bank will have in these bond issues. It may be that if France and the other Allied creditors demand an immediate issue large enough to account for all the non-postponable annuities, the bank will be legally obliged to proceed as directed. Still, the bank's advice in the matter is bound to carry weight. The unconditional annuity—660,000,000 marks—is so big as to make possible a sizable total of bonds, even if the interest rate be high. The face value of the total possible issue can scarcely be less than 8,000,000,000 marks—something like $2,000,000,000. War-time patriotism, plus war-time inflation, has been necessary to float issues of this order of magnitude in the past. When can the world market best absorb so great an amount? Should it not be divided into a series of issues? Banking advice must be sought on these matters. Furthermore, something will depend on the investors' estimates of the safety of the bonds, and that will depend on Germany's estimated capacity to pay. Even if we can rely upon the investors' tendency to be sheep-like, the prestige of the bank itself and of all its officers will be staked upon the safety of the issue. They will want to be perfectly certain that Germany will be able to pay 660,000,000 marks a year for thirty-seven years, before they recommend it.

It must furthermore be noted that the International Bank will not be allowed to undertake operations in any nation if the central bank of that nation interposes a veto. That means, for instance, that if our Federal Reserve authorities did not believe the situation was ripe for the flotation of the bonds in this country, the largest potential market would be closed. If, by some chance, the governors of a number of important central banks should oppose a bond issue, they could deprive the bonds of a market, even if, in their capacity as ruling powers of the International Bank, they were compelled to issue them. In one way or another, the bankers will have a chance to exercise their judgment as to the issue of reparation bonds. Let us hope they will have the courage to do so, and the discernment to do so wisely.

The International Bank may carry deposits—both ordinary and time deposits. Of course, the governments concerned must have accounts in it, and it is contemplated that the various central banks will have them, too. On the basis of its resources, it may lend money, or invest it, just as other banks do. There is doubt whether it may lend to governments, but it may lend to central banks. It may not issue currency—in this respect being unlike the central banks.

What relationship to its reparation functions has this ability to carry money on deposit, and to make loans and investments? Let us suppose a payment from Germany is nearly due. But let us suppose that the payment will suddenly throw enough marks on the market so that the rate of exchange will be unduly upset. The bank may arrange for a short-term loan to the Reichsbank, which will have the effect of neutralizing the fall of the mark. It can even, under certain circumstances, send its own funds into Germany and deposit them in the Reichsbank. Of course, it cannot manufacture an unlimited amount of credit. The total of its loans must bear some relationship to the total of its reserves, and these will depend upon how well the Allied governments and central banks coöperate with it, by holding funds on deposit, or otherwise strengthening its position. But it is probable that the bank will be able to avert any minor or temporary crises threatened by the transfer of reparations, which might have been serious under a less flexible system.

Such activities would not, of course, have any effect on Germany's real and ultimate capacity to pay. Banks can facilitate loans, but they cannot perform miracles. It has been suggested that the bank may make long-term loans or investments in backward countries (like Russia) which, as a result of these funds, may greatly increase their orders for goods from Germany. This would help build a German export surplus and so increase German capacity to pay. Interesting as such possibilities may be, the central banks which control the International Bank may be counted upon to limit its activity most jealously to exceedingly safe and sound operations. And it would be interesting to see whether the several Allied governments would not, through their central banking organizations, exert influence against aid to German exports, if the export trade of their own nationals should begin to suffer by it. Assurance that such aid was necessary to build up Germany's capacity to pay might not weigh heavily with them.

Any profits which accrue from the bank's transactions will, after paying dividends of limited amount, be built up into a fund to help meet the postponable annuities for the last twenty-two years.

There is a final possible function which the bank might exercise in settling the reparation issue. If in the course of time it became apparent to the informed that Germany could not pay, the Allied authorities might conspire with the bank to conceal that fact in a maze of financial technicalities. The bank might enable Germany to make the specified payments year after year, by continuing to lend to Germany equivalent amounts. The Allied governments—or their central banks—might enable the bank to do this by leaving on deposit in it, or by lending to it, the amounts which Germany paid.

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Then they could say to their people; "See—Germany has paid us. Our money is on deposit at the International Bank!" But the funds could never be withdrawn, in this case, without bankrupting Germany and the bank. It is just conceivable that some such action as this might be taken in order to protect the enormous private investments and loans which have gone into Germany from the United States and other countries since the inauguration of the Dawes Plan.

The bank is a very ingenious device, but it does not alter basically the judgment that Germany cannot pay unless she is able to export a large surplus of goods and services, and that we have no assurance that she will be able to do so.

III

Suppose the reparation riddle finally solved, what chance has the International Bank of becoming a central bank for the world, and so matching on the financial field the world-wide interlacings of industry, trade, communications, literature and science? There is a poetic fullness about such a conception which makes it attractive. And it seems like the way of the world for something invented for one purpose to become much more important in other ways, after its original purpose is forgotten.

It is hoped by some that it will be used by the central banks as a reserve bank, just as the central banks themselves are used as reserve banks by the commercial banks of their respective countries. That would permit a still greater elasticity of credit than now exists. It would create machinery for avoiding world-wide credit stringencies. By adjusting its rediscount rate, and managing its purchases of securities, the International Bank might help to stabilize credit and price levels all over the world.

It is also hoped that the bank, as a clearing agency for international accounts, would minimize shipments of gold among countries. This would kill two birds with one stone; it would avoid the expense of shipment, and it would stabilize exchange rates. At present, international debts have to be paid by the exchange of currency or the shipment of gold (in so far as they do not cancel each other out, within any one country.) But if the big banks all had accounts at a single international institution, the payments of these debts could largely be made by means of entries on its books and changes in its several deposit accounts, just as individuals in this country can now pay each other by check, because they deposit in an inter-connected banking system.

There is, no doubt, a need for an institution which could do these things. The Governor of the Bank of England and the Governor of the New York Federal Reserve Bank both worry a good deal about possible inflation or deflation of credit and prices. So do the authorities of the other central banks. They all know that financial conditions in one country affect those in others. They meet, occasionally and informally, to discuss things like rediscount rates and gold movements. If they were all members of the board of an international bank where they could pool at least part of their reserves and could fix a world rediscount rate, they could attend to these matters more systematically and effectively.

But there are enormous difficulties to overcome before such a goal could be reached. There is no international government to enforce participation in the work of an international bank, as the respective national governments enforce at least a certain degree of participation in the work of the central reserve banks. And the existing central banks and governments are very jealous of their existing power. They are not ready to pass over to an international board much jurisdiction over their internal policies. Nor are they anxious to ship abroad their reserves. The International Bank would have stood no chance whatever of acceptance if the central banks had not been given a veto over its operations in their respective countries. Great Britain was so fearful of its possible rivalry with the Bank of England that she wanted it in London, and will consent to its establishment elsewhere reluctantly, if at all. The only chance of the new bank to become a world financial center, like its only chance to facilitate reparation payments, lies in the willingness of the central banks and governments to allow it to exercise the necessary powers.

There is, indeed, a good deal to be said against its possible accession to the great powers it might assume. To whom or to what would it be responsible? If a majority of the peoples of the world desired to reverse its policy, how could they do so? Might there not be justifiable differences of opinion among nations as to whether bank rates should be high or low in a given situation? Could we rely upon it to play no favorites? Independent as the central banks of the several nations are in ordinary matters, they are subject to law which may be changed as the public feels a need for doing so, and to governmental influence which may be exerted in a crisis. But the International Bank would be under no government. Even if it lived up to the best traditions of banking would it not, in reflecting the bias of the financial rulers of capitalism, be capable of doing great harm to any nation which might wish to embark on an experiment in Socialism? Centralization of world finance may be an inevitable development. It means creating a great agency of social control. But the policies which are to inspire that control are extremely important. It is well that the possibly brilliant future of the International Bank should be approached with exceedingly cautious steps. We are not ready quite yet to hand over the economic destiny of the world to an autonomous professional group—even if that group be composed of the most expert and public-spirited bankers conceivable.

GEORGE SOULE.

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Ivy Lee

Minnesinger to Millionaires

IVY LEDBETTER LEE—for this was the mellifluous name given the Georgia prodigy more than half a century ago—is a member of expensive and more or less exclusive clubs abroad and at home, dwells in the fashionable East Sixties, has lectured to the London School of Economics, pontificates on our recognition of Soviet Russia, and is confidential adviser to the elder and junior Rockefellers, Charles M. Schwab, W. W. Atterbury, the Armours and other millionaires. No wonder he has been dubbed "the king of press agents." This, however, is not what he calls himself. He is an "adviser" and "counsel" in public relations.

Such activities, as they relate to the daily press and to the electorate of this republic, are of obvious consequence. We have many members of the guild, none quite so successful, and none nearly so distinguished, as Mr. Lee. What is his "racket"? What is the nature of the information he distributes to a public before which he appears as a special pleader for special interests?

Let me explain at the outset that there is nothing commonplace about Mr. Lee's education, intelligence, or ambition. He merits thoughtful attention. Back in 1903, he quit an underpaid job as reporter for The New York Times for the more profitable pursuit of press-agenting. In the special field that he created for himself he was a pioneer. Thousands of newspaper men and graduates of Schools of Journalism have followed him, for the publicity men and counselors in public relations in this country are recruited mostly from those two fields. Many of these thousands, I do not doubt, were inspired by Mr. Lee's financial and social prestige to follow his example.

One of Mr. Lee's early jobs was to represent the Rockefellers during the bloody warfare that resulted from the strike against the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. The publicity he put out was subjected to Congressional inquiry, and some facts were elicited as to the ethical standards which animated him. These are a matter of public record, and have often been used against Mr. Lee. I do not see any occasion for repeating the stuff here. In the first place, I am persuaded that Mr. Lee has since arrived at a somewhat higher conception of his work; in the second place, I realize that it is human nature to justify personal errors. One of my father's earlier converts to the Baptist faith, I have been told, was a rich and elderly bachelor who had often been criticized for his ways of living and acquiring wealth, and who on a sick bed decided he had better make peace with his Creator. It was before the day of bath-tubs, but the servants rigged up an oilcloth contraption and my father dipped the old gentleman. After he had been dried off and put back into bed, the young clergyman sat beside him and said gravely: "I do not doubt, Brother van Meter, that if this spiritual change had come earlier in your life, you would have done a great many things differently." "Well," said Mr. van Meter, "taking it by and large, Brother Bent, I think I've done pretty goddam well." I venture to guess that Mr. Lee thinks he did pretty well by the Rockefellers in Colorado.

Certainly the elder Mr. Rockefeller can hardly say that Mr. Lee hasn't done well by him. Before he "retained" his own propagandist, he had suffered a deal from propagandists in the enemy camp, notably Miss Ida M. Tarbell. He was ill-esteemed by the American public. Now began his rehabilitation. On the advice of Mr. Lee, so I am told, the Rockefeller philathropies were increased to an unparalleled scale. Malicious newspaper paragraphers who noted that with nearly every benefaction came an increase in the price of oil or gasoline or both, calculated to bring a surplus revenue comparable with the gift, were publicly and severely rebuked. Gradually the mass attitude shifted. The splendid press Mr. Rockefeller got on his ninetieth birthday registers a main source of that change. Thus, on Sunday, July 7, Mr. Lee's former employer, The New York Times, spoke in an extended news story of Mr. Rockefeller as "America's 'grand old man' of finance," and in a two-page magazine article presented "an intimate picture of the man who accumulated the greatest fortune in the world and then, after divesting himself of much of his wealth, began to cultivate the fine art of living." This occupied the first two pages of the magazine section. Even those who are sceptical of any publicity man's achievements may recognize Mr. Lee's skillful hand in this.

It happens that the Rockefellers have been looking for oil concessions in Russia, and it has happened that Mr. Lee announced, as his "personal" opinion, that this country should recognize that government. It was a temerarious thing for an apologist of capitalism to do, and aroused a deal of newspaper and periodical comment. Diplomatically, it was even more indiscreet. Once upon a time I obtained from the State Department in Washington, with the understanding that I would submit the manuscript for visa as to accuracy, material for an article on trade with the Soviets. The only charge

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of inaccuracy was against my speaking of the Soviet government. It was explained to me that, since the United States had never recognized any such thing as a Soviet government, there couldn't be any such thing, at least so far as this country was concerned. The metaphysics of diplomacy is sometimes a bit confusing. In any case, my article was never printed. Mr. Lee labored under no such limitations. After his first pronouncement, he visited Russia for ten days, and wrote a book about it.

Ralph M. Easley of the National Civic Federation, himself a propagandist of parts, took Mr. Lee to task about that book. In an open letter to the press, he said that if Mr. Lee had kept all the engagements and attended all the functions, social and otherwise, mentioned in the book, "you must have abandoned for that ten-day period all ideas of eating and sleeping and spent the entire 240 hours in one continuous round of 'riotous' conferring. . . . What you doubtless did was to start the Skvirsky bureau in Washington at work on your report as soon as you made up your mind to go to Russia, so that upon your return Colonel Skvirsky would have it ready for you to add a few touches of local color."

This charge Mr. Lee repudiated, but Mr. Easley was moved, nevertheless, to certain indignant reflections.

"Much is permitted," he said, "to a professional publicity man, especially when he affects also the role of statesman, because of the recognized commercial motives which must dominate his every act and every word, however beautiful the rhetoric with which he may envelop the latter. But there are limits."

In this, I must disagree with Mr. Easley and the National Civic Federation. I cannot concede that there are limitations on Ivy Lee and Associates. There was the case, for example, of their efforts on behalf of the Interborough Rapid Transit, owner of subway and elevated lines under a special joint contract with New York City. The State Transit Commission summoned Mr. Lee to find out about these efforts, and learned that in less than eight years he had collected $212,954.19 for fees and expenses. The expenses were in part for the printing of the Subway Sun and the Elevated Express, broadsides posted in the cars. All the payments to Mr. Lee were charged to "operating expenses," and thus, under the transit contract, were paid by the city. The voters of New York and city officials had, by referendum and public utterance, rejected an increased fare, but the Subway Sun and the Elevated Express, published with city money, had advocated increasing the rate. When this point was brought out, Mr. Lee protested that it would be in the interest of the city and of car riders to increase the fare.

"Do you think," he was asked, "that it was proper for you to assume that you knew what was in the interest of the city, when the duly elected city authorities were opposed to it?"

"Yes, sir," Mr. Lee retorted. "It is conceivable that their favoritism for a five-cent fare was to get votes."

Favoring a five-cent fare merely to get votes is obviously quite different from favoring a higher fare in order to collect fees and expenses.

When Mr. Lee was asked to explain the difference between his work and that of a publicity agent, he said frankly that he didn't know, but he did clarify somewhat the dimensions of his function as an adviser in public relations:

> Practically every large corporation [he said] has, of course, very important relations with the public. It is important to study the operation of public opinion, and to study the attitude of the public. It is very important that the corporation of interest should make known its activities so they will be understood, and my work is to assist, so far as I can, in enabling corporations to do this.
>
> You mean [he was asked] in placing their affairs before the public through publicity methods in the most favorable light?
>
> That, and also shaping their affairs so that when placed before the public they will be approved.

On another occasion he said: "In the person of the modern publicity man we have someone who is marshalling the evidence for his side"—a special pleader before the court of public opinion, as Edward L. Bernays, another propagandist, expresses it—"and the newspaper must adjust itself to that."

The newspaper, needless to say, has adjusted itself. Many of the stories and items we read in the daily press emanate from agencies with an axe to grind (and are printed as a rule, not on the authority of that agency but on the journal's authority). Mr. Lee has somewhat facilitated this adjustment by the publication of an occasional clipsheet called Information. He is not the inventor of the clipsheet. That instrument for slicing out chunks of free space was conceived by propagandists for Prohibition in this land of the free, and is now an invaluable weapon in the armory of nearly all press agents. But Mr. Lee's Information, which comes to me without charge, is not devoted solely—or even mainly—to the immediate interests of his clients. Hear now its editor, in a semi-sentimental moment:

> One of my vivid memories of my father was his habit of culling from newspapers, magazines, books—in fact from every possible source—information of likely interest to his friends. He was constantly sending them clippings on every conceivable subject.
>
> The sort of work I do happens to make my office a clearing house for all kinds of information, and much of this material is so interesting or suggestive that I like to share some of it at frequent intervals with my friends and acquaintances. The result is Information, an informal publication, with no other purpose than to be of interest to the people to whom it is sent.

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Thus, I have found, in this altruistic periodical, articles and items and editorials credited to The Manchester Guardian, The New York Times, The New York Commercial, Will Durant's "Story of Philosophy," The London Morning Post, The United States Daily, and so on; as well as items and articles about international radiocasting, a jeweler's retirement after selling $100,000,000 worth of pearls, honorary awards by New York University, the Pennsylvania Railroad—one of Mr. Lee's important clients—the president of a big textile industry, the consumption of copper in automobiles, and Daniel Guggenheim's interest—although a copper magnate—in aeronautics. Was it a coincidence that Mr. Guggenheim and Col. Charles A. Lindbergh received honorary degrees from N. Y. U.? And I have found, in the space called the "ear" of a newspaper, quotations from Abraham Lincoln, Benito Mussolini, and Chancellor Elmer Ellsworth Brown of New York University.

This is a varied fare. Let us see what Chancellor Brown has to say:

> One of the most commanding institutions in the world today is the public press, its activities ramifying into every other manifestation of social life. The progress of journalism as a rising profession is similarly marked by the endeavor to formulate and stabilize the ethical standards of its practitioners.

Hurrah! Now let's hear Il Duce Mussolini:

> True men, in politics, must be animated by the humane and devout sense; they must have a regard, a love and a deep vision toward their own fellow creatures. And all these qualities must not be defiled by dissimulations or rhetoric or flatteries or compromises or servile concessions.

Perhaps, after all, it was the Great Emancipator who said that. No, here is the quotation from Lincoln's first joint debate with Stephen L. Douglas, August 21, 1858:

> Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment nothing can fail; without it, nothing can succeed. Consequently he who molds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions. He makes statutes or decisions possible or impossible to be executed.

There's a pretty speech, made before ever a press agent was born into a waiting world! The job of the press agent and the counsel in public relations, as Mr. Lee will tell you, is to mold public sentiment. The mere press agent measures this molding by the amount of free newspaper space he garners. What he sells to his client is really a bunch of clippings. But the counsel in public relations sells advice in the conduct of business or the deportment of a public man, and a real or supposed "influence" with the press. To one who is about to make a speech, for example, the suggestion is offered that a pamphlet be printed, and that copies be sent to thousands of editors with personal letters from the propagandist. Thus, even if nothing is printed in the news columns—so the argument runs—the speech makes its indelible impress on the editorial mind. George W. Perkins, if I remember aright, died some thousands of dollars in debt to Ivy Lee for the printing and distribution of such a pamphlet. My own belief is that editorial writers consign pamphlets almost automatically to the waste-basket; and as for personal letters to thousands of them, anybody can attend to that who will bother to consult "Ayer's Newspaper Directory" or the "Year Book of Editor and Publisher," in order to acquaint himself with the necessary names and addresses. Yet I am assured that the mere promise of personal letters to editors is strangely effective with the uninitiate.

Mr. Lee is effective, too, by reason of a certain poise and confidence. Picture to yourself a Wall Street millionaire consulting this authority regarding public relations and their improvement in a certain field. Fancy Mr. Lee nodding profoundly and saying, "It *can* be done." This inspirational abracadabra has an extraordinary weight in Wall Street, which is temperamentally superstitious, like all aggregations of gamesters. Over the door leading to the late Judge Elbert H. Gary's offices in the steel "trust," for instance, there used to hang a framed motto: "It can be done." Ask your favorite broker whether your Common will advance ten points; likely as not he will look you shiningly in the eye and enunciate, "It can be done." When Mr. Lee utters the mystic phrase, so I'm told, the effect is almost miraculous.

It should be said that Mr. Lee does not distribute frivolities about the wardrobes of visiting theatrical artists, such as we often see in the newspapers. He flies for higher game. Small accounts seldom attract him, but he has been known to take an account for nothing, when the cause interested him. Once he was displeased with a certain line of publicity going out from Princeton, his alma mater, and volunteered to attend to the matter, or have his office attend to it, without charge. The proposal was accepted with joy, but those who accepted it gasped when the expense account rolled in. In other cases, where the fee is fat, there need be no surprise that Mr. Lee's activity is commensurate with the efforts of a high-priced lawyer on behalf of a client. Mr. Lee regards his work as professional, sometimes accepts retainers, and often compares himself with an attorney. In practising before the court of public opinion he is under no greater restriction, presumably, than the lawyer who sees to it that due process is extended to the defendant he knows to be guilty.

Even those of us who are pessimistic about the jury system under modern conditions, and many of us are, cannot fail to perceive that the expert manipulator of emotion among twelve good men and true is hardly so serious a menace to social stability as

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a troupe of trained propagandists, working on mass emotion and opinion chiefly on behalf of corporate and capitalist interests. Yet the very nature of our governmental processes facilitates the work of the propagandist. In ancient Greece and Rome, temple oracles swayed the public temper. There was no printing press, no radio and no newsreel. In the modern United States, issues are made by minorities, and minorities cannot make themselves heard without the assistance of national propaganda. Often the issues they champion are so specialized and intricate that the electorate cannot cope with them unless put through a kindergarten training, and perhaps is incompetent even then. How many persons in New York City are fitted to pass intelligently on the question of the five-cent fare? In the circumstances, Mr. Lee's pithy, statistical statement of the increase in costs of operation and equipment since the five-cent fare was instituted, as broadcast through the Subway Sun and the Elevated Express, puts a ready-made argument into the hands of the voter. It does not put into the voter's hands, strangely, statistics of the increase in passenger revenue, nor of economics affected through the introduction of such devices as turnstiles to supplant salaried ticket-choppers.

We thus have the manufacture of public opinion in this country largely in the hands of paid propagandists, working chiefly through the daily press. The real raw material of the newspaper is the human mind. We are a suggestible people, lacking the stabilizer of any real devotion to tradition, and the newspapers spray upon us constantly a stream of publicity and propaganda. My confident belief is that the daily press is rather to blame for the situation than the publicists and propagandists. When the United States was a participant in the World War (while Mr. Lee was serving the Red Cross among other clients), the newspapers learned to accept with docility the restrictions of official "information" dispensers. Having learned to accept war handouts without question, the daily press afterward made little apparent effort to change its habits. We need not be surprised that some publicity persons took advantage of the tacit invitation thus extended.

After the War the processes of propaganda expanded, and one noteworthy phase was developed by the protagonists of a Big Navy. The recent revelations regarding William B. Shearer and his boast that he wrecked the Geneva Conference of 1917 on limitations of naval armament brought to light that Mr. Lee had a finger in each of the pies cooked there. As the agent of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., described by Mr. Shearer as "one of the greatest backers of the pacifist move," Mr. Lee distributed tons of peaceful propaganda; at the same time he was propagandist for Charlie Schwab. Mr. Lee distributed material intended to create a sentiment for more naval craft and munitions.

Publicity and propaganda are not upon the same professional basis as the practice of law. It is true that publicity men in New York City have made a gesture of professionalizing themselves; but there still remains no disciplinary process by which one of them, if found guilty of breaching an established code of ethics, can be disbarred or unfrocked. They boast that they mold public sentiment, by which Abraham Lincoln set such great store. As a rule they admit that they do this, not for the public benefit, but for revenue only. It might be possible to register them, as lobbyists are registered, and hold them accountable to state or federal supervision. But if we were to attempt that, the newspapers would probably protest that the freedom of the press was being transgressed.

Ivy Lee, and the young men who are his associates, are as scrupulous, I do not doubt, as any who play their game. I like to think that they are aware of handling two-edged tools, and there is much in their record to show that they take conscientiously the position into which the press, our modern civilization, and our governmental institutions have thrust them. Mr. Lee has been made the subject of this sketch not because he is worse than any of the others, nor even as bad, but because he is in their vanguard. Logically, he is the man, on account of his preëminence in the craft, to initiate a voluntary house-cleaning.

SILAS BENT.

Washington Notes

THE definite and apparently irreconcilable nature of the Republican split, as demonstrated in both the farm relief and the tariff bill fights of the extra session, has again started talk in Washington of the re-creation of a third party—or rather, the creation of a new one—talk which, in my judgment, is nonsense. Various of the upper set in the "corps of correspondents" have recently indulged in more or less profound speculations concerning the possibilities of an amalgamation, in 1932, of Progressive Republicans of the West with Democrats of the South, forming a compact organization bound together by common interests. A few of the lighter weights in public office, also, disjointedly discuss this dream of the political future. It is perfectly true that the combination is a natural and reasonable one. On practically every public question and almost every political principle of the day, the West and the South think and feel alike—farm relief, Prohibition, the tariff, railroad regulation, power and public utility issues. Here and there will be found a state which is an exception, but in the main, western and southern sentiment are largely identical. Certainly, these sections are vastly more in harmony with each other than with the industrial East, which is so largely wet and dominated by the banks. Politically and geographically, the division is complete. Every vote in the Senate shows it. Every senatorial speech makes it plain.

Nevertheless and notwithstanding, no well-balanced person with whom I have talked takes seriously the suggestion that at last we are about to congeal politically into the logi-

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cal conservative and liberal parties which have so long been written about as inevitable. On the contrary, most thoughtful men regard the situation, chaotic as it is—in the Senate—as altogether lacking in the basic essentials of a national realignment. The principal reason they point out is that any such movement as is suggested must first have a leader and he must come from the Progressive Republican side. There is none. He simply does not exist. Since the death of the senior LaFollette, there has not been a man in the Progressive ranks capable of supplying the sort of leadership necessary for a third party or new party movement. It is regrettable to say that, but it is true. There is exactly one man among the Progressive Senators who is always prepared to go the limit in the support of his principles, George Norris of Nebraska. Party lines have not held, and do not hold, Norris. He does not fight up to the day the Republican National Convention speaks, and then fall in line and follow, as the rest of them do (even the younger LaFollette does not take the bit in his teeth like his distinguished father and break clean, regardless of personal consequences). Even remembering Norris, however, no one I know thinks that today there is in the Progressive group a man who can lead the sort of revolt that would result in a new party. In the Senate, the Progressives hang together with commendable solidarity but in the campaign they again become individual politicians, mindful of the presence in their respective states of a large number of unshakably regular Republican voters.

That is one reason why there is no serious new-party idea among them—but there are plenty of other reasons. One, of course, is the difficulty of financing a nation-wide fight of any sort, and the knowledge that financing is essential. Another is the practical impossibility of getting Southern Democrats to "go along." These Southern Democrats will supply the tail to the Progressive kite, in the Senate fight against the administration, but only impractical theorists believe that it would be possible to wean them away from their old party allegiances, even though the old party in its next national convention, as in the last, picks a candidate and adopts a platform which are wholly obnoxious to Southern feeling. It just can't be done. If nothing else would keep them fighting under the dear old Democratic flag, and going down with great regularity and consistency to defeat, they would be held by apprehension concerning the possible stirring up of the Negro suffrage situation, once they allied themselves with an element holding different views on that pregnant question. There is no real hope of a Democratic-Progressive combination outside of the Senate. The coalition begins and ends there—which puts the finish on the idea of a new party. The sense of futility born out of painful past experience is another good reason why the idea of a third party is not likely to be revived in any seriousness.

But there is still another reason, so far as 1932 is concerned—Herbert Hoover. For a successful Progressive revolt, as opposed to a mere Senate show, it seems to me necessary to have as the leader of the regular Republicans a genuine conservative, a stand-patter of the Taft or Coolidge type, a recognized member of the old organization, supported and loved by the Old Guard, claimed as their own. No one of whom I have heard contends that Mr. Hoover fills that role. While he is undoubtedly out of sympathy with the Progressives on the debenture plan, he is more closely in tune with them and with the Democrats than with the leaders of the regular Republicans in the Senate. Some of these still privately denounce him as a Democrat. None regards him as one of them. It is a curious and interesting thing that a President elected by such an overwhelming majority as Mr. Hoover should be so aloof from both factions of his party in the Senate, so soon after his inauguration. Yet with the Progressives solidly lined up against him, there is no pretension that his politics are those of Watson, Smoot, Reed, Bingham, Moses, Hale, Phipps, Goff or Deneen. Nor is it contended that he is dominated by Mellon, Morgan, and the railroads. On the contrary, not one of these was enthusiastic about his nomination and scarcely any are enthusiastic about him now. His most earnest Senate suporters are Allen and Capper from the agricultural state of Kansas, and there is just one old-style politician—Mr. Good—in his Cabinet. Nor is there in it a single recognized Progressive of the Senate type.

Altogether, it is a situation practically without precedent; but I submit that it lacks the elements essential for a great party split or a campaign combination between a rebellious wing of the majority party and the most dependable section of the minority. Those things can take place, under these conditions, in the Senate, but not outside, or at least, so it seems to me. The ultimate outcome of the present mess is not likely, therefore, to be very important politically. As I have stated before, the truth is that the violent Senate conflict over the tariff has not resulted in interesting the people as a whole. They pay vastly more attention to spectacular incidents, such as the Bingham censure and the Brookhart dinner-party "exposures," than they do to the merits of either farm relief or tariff. So far as the latter is concerned, it is generally agreed now that there will be no tariff legislation and there is little dissatisfaction with that idea. The merry game now going on of "passing the buck," to avoid responsibility, in which Democrats, Progressives, Old Guard leaders and Mr. Hoover are all engaged, does not thrill anyone. All it does is still further to blur the facts, which diminishes public interest.

In the regular session, the chances are that Mr. Hoover will be given the same sort of rough ride he has had in this. He is likely to have Progressive-Democratic opposition to the important features of his program, and lukewarm support from as impotent and inept a set of regulars as has ever been seen. It is not a promising prospect for those who had hoped for a "great, constructive administration," and it may be that his futility will react upon Herbert's personal popularity, though Mr. Coolidge's certainly never did upon him. As I have mentioned before, the big trump card up the Hoover sleeve is the London naval conference which opens in January. If he comes out of that with a spectacular and concrete achievement, it is the judgment of those who look farthest ahead that he will have enough prestige to keep him going through the next campaign. But even if he does not, I do not believe either a new or a third party will develop from the present coalition.

T. R. B.

Washington.

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Berkeley Square

Berkeley Square, by John L. Balderston. Lyceum Theater, November 4, 1929.

LARGELY through Mr. Leslie Howard, somewhat through the other performances, and partly through its idea, "Berkeley Square" is a delightful entertainment. What Mr. Howard does marks a steady growth in the warmth of his playing and in a certain ability to let his emotions reveal themselves more directly. He has always given a unity to his performance and always played with taste, and with an ability to make his points clearly and easily. To this he now adds, more than ever before, a poetic character, though his gifts, in voice and method, are those of good comedy. At the same time he manages to lose none of his old technical certainty. Miss Margalo Gilmore understands her role—the beloved spirit in the young man's spirit, the girl dead a hundred and forty years before—and establishes the part excellently, in spite of passages now and then that would be hard sledding for any player—that about the bombs and horrors of the War, for example. It is no little thing to succeed with a part in the playing of which the least falsity in sentiment would be fatal.

"Berkeley Square" was suggested by Henry James's posthumous fragment, "A Sense of the Past." Mr. J. C. Squire is credited with having had a hand in it, and there are rumors of other retouchings and remodelings, in the effort to reduce this theme and situation to theater terms. The signs of the effort are frequent in the play, which on the whole remains somewhat intangible, elusive and diverted from its theme. The plot, if you leave out meanings, is not hard to tell. A young American who, at about the same time had written an architectural booklet, and made friends with an aged English cousin has been left the family house in Berkeley Square. There he has immured himself, studying old letters and diaries and records, fascinated by the antiquities, the eighteenth century, the family's past, the Reynolds portrait of his ancestor, Peter Standish, who looks exactly like him, repeats his name, and like him had come back from America to the family seat.

Our Peter Standish is engaged to marry Marjorie Frant, an American girl, who will look after his vague ways and whose money will set the old house in order, a roof for instance. He has been strangely absent and absorbed, the housekeeper is alarmed, the fiancée also, and through her the American ambassador comes to see after the young man's state of mind and health. Marjorie herself comes. The old clock, striking the hour these many years, now as then in the eighteenth century when the other Peter Standish had come from America; the room, the old furniture, the journal that tells him that today, October 23, was the day the cousin and suitor came for his first visit, all these are in Peter Standish's mind. Marjorie tries to save him. The thunder comes, the lights go out, he leaves her and joins that company of another century.

We see the family life, the brother with his drinking and his gaming debts, and the little Mr. Throstle, who is to marry Helen, the second daughter; we see Peter Standish meeting his betrothed, Kate. She loves him at sight. Then he sees Helen face to face. His seeing into the future, his forays into modern impatience, invention, words and morals, his piercing eyes that see them all as a part of the past, his love for Helen and hers for him, Kate's later sense of his unreality and fear of him as something from the devil, these make up the story, until his departure, at Helen's request, back into his own world, and the appearance of the real Peter Standish of their time, their own. The last act shows the modern day again; Peter Standish has visited Helen's grave, and brought away a copy of the inscription on her tomb. The ambassador comes again, Marjorie comes, their arguments are vain, Marjorie finds herself unwanted, forgotten almost, and goes away without even being seen by the eyes of that lover, who sits there by the table reading over the words from the tombstone of the dead girl. That is the bare story.

Every art, of course, has its hard necessity; whatever it has to express must be reduced to the terms of the art employed, said in its medium. There may be other things that may be gathered from the work of art, through inference, association or some other means; but in so far as they are not created within it, they are only incidental and shaky; the thing has not been quite created. The theater, as an art so impure in its medium, involving the play, the actors, the production, the occasion, the audience, has its own peculiar difficulties. One of these difficulties is that it must either go off well with the occasion's audience or else go under and fail. This leads to special considerations as to what the audience will understand or like, and this, in turn can fuddle the issue. It not only drives and confuses those who are willing to do things any way and serve any masters that will pay, but often distorts the most honest of intentions. There is also in every art the problem of what subject, or what elements of that subject, can, even with genius, ever be expressed through it—how much, for example, of what is tried for in this play of Mr. Leslie Howard's could ever be said in theater terms. Certainly the stamp of minds not habituated to the theater helps to give such a play as this a freshness that is desirable enough. The theater, like all forms of art, is constantly in need of new themes and new ways of living, by which its content is dilated and renewed and its form determined and freshly re-stated.

Emotionally, imaginatively, there remained with me, I think, a certain distinct enough sum of the content of "Berkeley Square." Through the force of the thoughts behind its writing, and through Mr. Howard's delicate and secure portrayal of its meanings, most of which are inherent in the central role, I got a certain central theme, or perhaps *feeling* would be a better word. It is a beautiful thing I got, well worth trying for, even though the result is elusive, not completely stated, and not quite seen, in fact, either by the creators of play and performance or by us in the audience.

The final result, however, achieves, on the one hand, a pleasurable, lovely mood, a rarity of spirit and freshness of stage theme, and certain moments of great beauty. Some of the motivations are witty and delightful to think of afterward, such as Peter Standish's quoting stale epigrams from Oscar Wilde, to the dazzled awe of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, who has heard all the wits of her time, and his flinging off some of the chestnuts of modern politics for the benefit of the great minister. This scene with the famous duchess is a gem, complete and deeply

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imagined, beginning with the play of epigrams and coquetry, and ending with a kind of tragic *genre*, as through his eyes she sees herself down the far perspective of time, fame and death. There are certain entertaining moral and social elements in the comparisons between that eighteenth century, the age of reason, and our time, the age of whatever it is. The hero's disgust at royalty's blowing noses through fingers, at the dirt, the brutality of the law, the public attendance at burnings and whippings, his restless flights toward airplanes and cigarettes, have many possibilities of entertainment, now well done, now less successful, as they come up in the course of the play. On the other hand, the final result leaves you puzzled as to the whole, straight, basic theme and idea and intention of the play.

I see two possible directions for "Berkeley Square." One would be the story of this young man, engaged to a girl without quite being in love with her, returning to his ancestral home and, through brooding and natural inclination, and study, to his ancestors in the eighteenth century, falling in love with a girl there and then, back in his own time, visiting her grave, letting his own modern girl go away from him, unwanted, and sitting at the last curtain, absorbed in his dream. As a matter of fact, this is what the story as it stands, amounts to. The last act forces that version on it. In which case, it remains a fantasy, and the young man, delicate and meditative and witty as he may be, remains a fantastic character, and the content of the play remain pretty, sentimental and fanciful, though far superior to most of its general type and not without something of Barrie's kind of pathetic whimsy.

The other direction would take up more of what the creators of the play, including—and very much so—Mr. Howard, must have had for an aim. It turns on one theme. This theme gets lost now and again, after it begins; it is marred by the introduction of the over-obvious details about modern war, mud and other items, when the girl is seeing the future through her lover's eyes; and it is shadowed and reinforced by that second theme of the longing to escape from the prison in which we are held, the torment when we have escaped—the strangeness, poignancy and bewitched fear that these people in the play feel, moved forward or backward in time toward what they were not born to. This main theme is that of the dream, the ideal secret and solitude, the love, the kiss, that never will be and never has been, but that is in him, and was in her, and has been in many another, too, though the play says nothing of that. It is a theme worth losing the technical battle over, if one must lose; and the full sense of it is what gives Mr. Howard the key for his fine portrayal.

Sir Edwin Luytens, the British architect, whose government houses in Delhi, English country houses, and British Embassy in Washington are more or less internationally known, has designed an admirable Queen Anne room for "Berkeley Square," and the genuine furniture of the period, with Sir Joshua's actual easel thrown in —though we laugh nowadays at Mr. Belasco for that sort of thing—does no harm. And in this décor must be included Miss Valerie Taylor, who not only played very well indeed the role of the first Peter Standish's betrothed, but looked as if she might be some wild, unfinished, lovely Romney that had come to life. STARK YOUNG.

Musicals, Imp. & Dom.

IT IS a notoriously evil season for musical shows, and after each mild pleasure or mild disappointment we sit and hope for the next one. The Murray Anderson "Almanac" was the first of the retrospective musical pieces and in spite of ingratiating material, has already vanished. "Sweet Adeline" disappointed only those who, like myself, had extravagant hopes. We waited then for "Great Day," for "A Wonderful Night"; now we have waited and seen "Bitter Sweet," and the season remains still a bad one.

I feel a lack of spirits, a low vitality in all these revivals and retrospectives, as if the composers and authors had given up the attempt to create interest or comedy or a spectacular splendor out of their natural material and decided, since the Nineties were "in," that quoting "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay" or "Break the News to Mother" would make pleasant music, that costumes and comedy could issue from the storehouse, and that the American public was tired of jazz. Mr. Carroll and Mr. White cast dissenting votes.

The chief present interest is "Bitter Sweet," the operetta which Noel Coward wrote and composed and directed. In his single person, Mr. Coward constitutes a ministry of all the theatrical talents, but his principal secretary is still the dramatist who can make almost anything effective. You sense a weariness in him at the beginning: the dear old lady, gray-haired and delicate, protesting against jazz and introducing the mechanism of the fable: "Come back with me into the past and I will show you the reality of sentiment," and you feel it again in the time-frayed story of the daughter of a bourgeois house deserting her proper fiancé on the eve of her wedding, to elope with the foreign music teacher. But the young man's old skill is there and it brings the plot to life when in a Viennese café the wife is insulted by an officer, the husband interferes, and rapiers are called for. One gasp from a spectator in the café tells you that the duel is murder and the curtain goes down on the dying man, with a long sustained cry from another woman for its music. The stagecraft, the virtuosity of this brief scene are matchless.

And there the difference between Mr. Coward's method and the American method becomes clear. That scene might have been less well handled if Mr. Coward had turned over his lyrics to a librettist, his music to a composer who wanted to write a great noisy epilogue to the scene, and to a director who "knew better" and would have had the entire company keening and swaying like the mourners in a Negro show. The best thing in the production might have been less good. On the other hand, the rest of the show would have been infinitely better. For Mr. Coward's music is not especially interesting, lacking freshness and even satiric point; and his lyrics are only occasionally as good as the best. The dances he arranged are quaint and amusing, but he wanted to weave them into the plot and the atmosphere, so they aren't exceptional in themselves. That he omitted vaudeville acts is natural enough, since he stuck close to operetta and held away from revue; our own producers mix the styles without compunction. But what he did put in, all harmonious, is not all of the first order.

"Sweet Adeline" is the work of many hands and has a number of starred performers—"Bitter Sweet" has only

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one. The American show is a vaudeville running along with an operetta, the plot is ten times more involved than Coward's and one-tenth as effective in itself. But Helen Morgan, of whom I have already written in another connection, can take any material and make it moving out of all proportion to its merits. Mr. Butterworth's humors in "Sweet Adeline" are totally out of the period and so is the whole burlesque of the burlesque show, so is Irene Franklin in her robust and hearty comedy. But by breaking down the antiquarian interest, the authors have given the show some vitality, and Mr. Kern, without giving us a second "Show Boat," has written music which is more a concentration of the spirit of the 1890's than a reminiscence of its tunes. He is a master of many styles and handled the charm and rather awkward grace of the time perfectly. He is a professional, and Mr. Coward, in music and in many other things, is an amateur.

And the amateur has never got on in musical shows and never will. The technical requirements are too severe. The amateur can understand style, but he cannot project it. Let Mr. Coward wander into the Shubert production of "A Wonderful Night," which is "Die Fledermaus" of Johann Strauss, and he will find a great field for his talent. For the expert, professional producers haven't decided whether to go back to the style of any previous version of the old piece or forward to a new one (which their revolving stage suggested). So, except for the music, the show is cluttered and sprawls and grows so dull that you actually begin to quarrel with the plot as you did twenty years ago. Mr. Coward could tell them exactly how to make the whole thing a charming unit—he could tell them, but they themselves would have to do it.

Mr. Carroll and Mr. White stick to the old formula which, by the way, includes experimenting with anything new. I was amused to note a difference between native and domestic stars. Miss Evelyn Laye, a prima donna enjoying the highest salary on the musical stage, sang well in "Bitter Sweet," but seemed to take particular pleasure in being gamine, in pert looks and wrinkling of the nose, and always in creating comedy. Miss Frances Williams, in the "Scandals," walked up stage so far that one became almost unconscious of her presence; she would not dance much, and sang her songs as if they were beneath her; she was being a personality on the stage, not a player.

The Carroll-White-Ziegfeld formula, which Mr. Ziegfeld has for the moment abandoned, is to build a musical show around good dance music, with pretty girls to do the dancing, and comedians to play in the sketches; acrobats and a plot are added attractions, inessential. It remains a good ground plan. Unless the plot is utterly fantastic, or taken frivolously as it was in the Princess shows, the less it intrudes, the better. "The Street Singer," for example, deals with a flower girl who is transformed into a great lady, largely by a process of correcting her table manners and her speech. It provides the same sort of comedy and the same sort of emotion as it did in "Pygmalion," but they are not appropriate to the show, which is not operetta.

At the moment no big promises are being made. The composers seem to have taken two ways—to Hollywood and to the Metropolitan. So the season may yet be memorable only because the Victor Herbert revivals gave pleasure.

GILBERT SELDES.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Open Door in the Philippines

SIR: In your issue of November 6, on page 313, I think you have made a very valuable suggestion under the caption: "The Open Door in the Philippines." Much can be said in favor of "tariff autonomy" for the Philippines, pending their earliest possible independence. Indeed, "tariff autonomy" might facilitate a significant "laboratory test" of Filipino self-sufficiency. At an early date I hope to discuss your suggestion on the floor of the Senate.

Meanwhile, may I say that your present article unwittingly puts a slightly wrong interpretation upon my Senate resolution relative to the extension of American coastwise shipping laws to the Philippines. The resolution does not call for this extension. It calls for an inquiry into what may be "sound public policy" in connection therewith. You state it is an effort of "the beet-sugar cohorts" which "having failed in their efforts to impose a tariff on Philippine sugar, hope to secure their ends by an increase in shipping costs, etc." I am proud to be numbered among "the beet sugar cohorts": but I voted *against* a tariff tax on Philippine sugar. Therefore, I am not engaged in any effort predicated upon the failure to get this tax. But I do very frankly feel that the Philippines should not have *both* a free market in the United States *and* immunity from those transportation laws which the rest of us (including Hawaii and Porto Rico) who enjoy these free markets have to observe. This immunity from our coastwise laws adds a *transportation* differential to the other great economic preferentials which the Filipino farmer enjoys over the American farmer. In other words, I agree that so long as the Philippines remain under the American flag, they should have equality of tariff treatment with any State in the Union; but I raise the question whether they should shed this status when it comes to our shipping laws. The tariff issue would have given the Philippines *less* than equality with the States: the coastwise issue questions whether they should enjoy *more* than equality with the States. You are correct, however, in your final conclusion that the extension of the coastwise laws to the Philippines would increase the cost of Philippine sugar in the United States.

I have no prejudged opinion on the subject. I am in search of light. I cannot believe that we are called upon to pay a federal subsidy upon Filipino sugar—which happens when U. S. Shipping Board vessels bring it from Manila to New York at rates (fixed by competition with foreign ships) which entail an annual loss upon the public Treasury. Yet, I fully agree that our Philippine policy cannot be modeled solely upon our own economic necessities. I agree also that ultimate independence is the conclusive answer to the whole problem; and pending this ultimate result, your suggestion of "tariff autonomy" is thoroughly pertinent.

A. H. VANDENBERG.

United States Senate, Washington, D. C.

Will the Little Theater Save Us

SIR: The editorial entitled "The Canned Virtuoso," in your issue of October 23, was entertaining, but it didn't do any credit to your powers of observation. The trend you call attention to just doesn't seem to be trending. Let me assure you that the inhabitants of Hillsboro—and the inhabitants of Schenectady, of Ypsilanti, of Seattle and of Pittsfield—will continue to enjoy second-rate performances by home talent, even though God himself goes into the talking movies. I am thinking specifically of the little theater movement, which coincides very closely with the growth of the movie, phonograph and radio industries. Please remember that there were very few little theaters producing Molière and Shakespeare, Shaw and Ibsen, in the days when phonographs and movies and radios were scarce.

Let me use, as an example, the experience of the Schenectady Civic Players. This group was organized about nine months ago, at a time when W. C. Fields and some of the other famous persons you mention in your editorial were first appearing in Schenectady in talking movies. In spite of the attraction of Mr.

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Fields about 700 persons came to see a play by Chekhov and one by Benavente. And our third production ("Craig's Wife" was the play) was seen by 1,700 persons, even though Greta Garbo was available at the time. Furthermore, even though both Kreisler and Ukulele Ike may soon be heard in the talkies, we hope to launch a series of musical recitals this winter, and we are altogether sanguine about its success.

The Civic Players are under no illusions as to the quality of their work. Obviously if they were Fontaines and Lunts, Kreislers and Paderewskis, they wouldn't be giving amateur performances in an upstate manufacturing city. But they're doing the best they can do and they enjoy doing it. The audiences, too, are enjoying their work, and are "getting," as our local newspaper says, "their money's worth." If you don't believe it, the Civic Players will be glad to furnish complimentary tickets to any members of The New Republic staff who care to attend the opening performance in our new theater on December 10.

Schenectady, N. Y. PHILIP WAGNER.

It Was the Maharajah

SIR: On glancing over my article on Patrick Geddes, in The New Republic for October 30, I note a reference to the "now deposed Nizam of Hyderabad." This is a dreadful howler, and an insult to the Nizam into the bargain: I meant, of course, the "now deposed Maharajah of Indore." Why I should have slipped in the wrong title no conscious part of me is aware.

New York City. LEWIS MUMFORD.

A Conference on Birth Control

SIR: May I extend a cordial invitation to your New York City readers to attend the sessions of the American Birth Control League Convention, which will be held at the Hotel Astor, November 18, 19, 20. A varied program just announced contains the names of thirty-five men and women prominent in church and college, the medical profession, the press, and in all branches of social welfare work.

The climax of the convention will be a mass meeting to be held at the Engineering Auditorium, 29 West Thirty-ninth Street, Tuesday evening, November 19. Three leading religious thinkers, Dr. Henry V. B. Darlington, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, and Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, will speak on the subject, "Is Birth Control Immoral and Unsocial?"

A special luncheon program has been arranged at which Heywood Broun will preside. Dr. E. Boyd Barret, a former Jesuit priest, will speak on "Birth Control and the Roman Catholic Church," followed by Mary Ware Dennett, who will talk on "Birth Control and the Law." What will probably turn into a lively debate will be held between two speakers holding opposing views of the question, "Does Birth Control Promote Immorality?" Canon William Chase and Dr. Joseph Mayer will conduct the discussion. Other speakers include Dr. Clarence C. Little, Dr. Shirley Wynne, Dr. Henry Pratt Fairchild, William Hodson and Rabbi Sidney Goldstein.

MRS. F. ROBERTSON JONES.
President, American Birth Control League.

New York City.

From a Gastonia Defendant

SIR: As one of those convicted to imprisonment of seventeen to twenty years in the Gastonia case, I would like to use the correspondence section of your magazine to answer some of the editorial views expressed on our case in your issue of October 30.

The views expressed can be summed up as follows: "We *trust* that the conviction of the seven unionists in Gastonia will be promptly appealed. . . . The *main ground of the appeal* ought to be the ruling of Judge Barnhill that . . . the testimony of a witness can be impeached if he does not believe in a personal and punishing God. . . . *Whether or not the defendants were actually guilty of second-degree murder, we are, at this juncture incompetent to judge. Aderholt was, of course, shot by someone.* . . . The prosecution utilized every means fair and foul, to get the accused *regardless of their possible guilt.* . . The jury did not lay sufficient weight on the evidence which *tended* to exculpate the condemned or give them justification in the plea of self-defense. Certainly, the state was unable to prove that any of them fired the fatal shot. The trial in many aspects was a sorry travesty on that ideal of justice which assumes to accord to every suspect his deserts, regardless of his opinions and his position in life." (Italics throughout are mine.)

I have quoted the highlights, not for the purpose of picking isolated sentences, but for the sake of discarding the unessentials in the editorial. I am assuming that this editorial is representative of liberal opinion, at least as represented by The New Republic, and not a hurriedly-written paragraph to fill in space.

Let me now take issue with those views.

The editorial expresses doubts about our innocence of committing the murder with which we were charged. This comes after the editor had a chance to study all the evidence as well as the background that surrounded the attack on our headquarters on the night of June 7. The opinion expressed by The New Republic does not recognize that the killing of the policeman has saved the lives of many workers, women and children, who lived in the tent colony. The facts as shown by the testimony in court revealed clearly that the police and the committee of 100, organized by the Manville-Jenckes Company, against whom we were striking, were determined "to kill them (us) out," as was expressed by Policeman Gilbert, who fired the second shot after his colleague Roach, who was not even an officer, fired the first shot. The fact that only two hours before the shooting both Gilbert and Roach were drunk and were disarmed by police officers in Mecklenburg County after shooting at a man at a soda-water stand on the main highway, was a slight point omitted by the editor.

Even when the editor refers to the matter of evidence regarding self-defense, he speaks of it as only *tending* to exculpate us. Mr. Editor, why all this hesitation about presenting the facts of our innocence? Why do you speak about our possible guilt, when you criticize the prosecution, not for "getting" us, but for the manner in which they got us?

The reason for this view of The New Republic and the "liberalism" that it represents is to be found in the basic social function of "liberalism" and reformism, namely, to find sugar-coated means with which to perpetuate the present system of exploitation of the workers. The illusions of "democracy" and "justice," are examples *par excellence*. It is because of these inherent contradictions in your basic conceptions that you shut your eyes to the class character of "justice" of which the Gastonia convictions are only one incident.

The case of the freeing of the murderers of the six union workers at Marion and of Ella May, a member of our union, in Gastonia, are samples of the same class justice that sentenced us to the penitentiary. It is because these examples of capitalist justice have been handed out crudely and will tend to disillusion the workers and reveal the true class character of our present-day "democracy" and "justice," that liberals are alarmed. I am not speaking of intentions, but the actual views expressed by the editor. The editor deplores, not the fact that seven of us were railroaded to a living death in the penitentiary, but that the trial was a "travesty of justice."

The real reason for writing this letter is to assure you that the case is being appealed by the I. L. D. It is surprising that the editor of The New Republic should not know that the lawyers gave notice of appeal the same day that the vicious sentences were imposed, also that the I. L. D. is raising $27,000 to be used as bail, thereby enabling us to enjoy freedom while the case is pending.

The hesitancy in expressing confidence in our innocence, the lack of recognition of this case as being an attempt to intimidate the workers and preventing them from organizing their union, and the wrong information concerning the appeal expressed in The New Republic might hurt our case, as it diverts support, financial and otherwise, from the efforts of the International Labor Defense to raise organization and funds to continue this fight.

CLARENCE MILLER.

Mecklenburg County Jail, Charlotte, N. C.

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Russia in Asia

Red Star in Samarkand, by Anna Louise Strong. New York: Coward-McCann. 339 pages. $3.50.

ONLY a half century ago the sensation of the season was Captain Fred Burnaby's "Ride to Khiva." His book took its place among the records of exploratory wandering in which English literature is rich—with Kinglake's "Eothen," if not quite with Doughty's "Arabia Deserta." For the high steppes of Central Asia, lately added to the Tsar's dominions, were then less in the current of the world's thought than the Congo, and were recalled only as the field of the half-legendary exploits of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane, or of Russia's very real advance toward India. It speaks plainly of the rapidity of man's conquest of the world that the journey of some weeks which Captain Burnaby made as an explorer, by horse and camel, Miss Strong as a journalist made in four days by train from Moscow to Samarkand—a few hours by aeroplane would have brought her to Khiva, and two days more to Kabul.

The great change in Central Asia has been brought about within the last ten years, under the administration of the Soviets. Nor is suppression of distance the chief part of the story. The Soviet government has undertaken to transform the economic and political system of the region, and still more to change the whole faith and spirit of the people along with their institutions, to substitute for the conservatism of individual fatalism the progress of collectivism, to replace Allah and his prophet by Karl Marx. This is a new kind of conquest in the world. The Anglo-Saxon has usually regarded his mission to the heathen as one of extermination. Noble races, rich in primitive cultures, have perished utterly from his path or been hopelessly debauched by his civilization. Where the conquered people was too numerous to be wiped out, and annexation was resorted to as in India, the method of the conquerors was to set themselves up as a superior race, in control of the police, army and transportation, to secure the subjection of the country and its exploitation, meanwhile making terms with the local powers, the landlords and clergy, and interfering as little as possible with the customs of the people. This was the method of the Tsarist conquest of Central Asia. As the British in India have protected a multitude of native rulers, so the Russians upheld the Emir of Bokhara, with his harem of 100 women and handsome boys, to which his faithful subjects were obliged to contribute their daughters and sons. Under Empress and Tsar alike the mass of poor people suffered the secular tyranny of the East from the associated forces of religion and private property. The Soviet government has undertaken the emancipation of the individual man, and especially the woman, from both. And this task involves not only political and economic change, the substitution of local self-government for feudalism, the expropriation of landlords and the introduction of machinery and collective effort; it means the psychological reorientation of the whole people, the submergence of ancient folk-ways in a modern culture.

Miss Strong's story is a fascinating mingling of old and new. We pass from camel to aeroplane, from the decaying bazaar of Bokhara to the coöperatives directed by the Cotton Committee of Central Asia, from the tombs of Tamerlane's family in Samarkand to the Construction Workers' Club on Karl Marx Avenue in Tashkent, to see a drama of Sacco and Vanzetti. We meet Achun Babaief, former farm laborer, now president of the Uzbek republic, and under his kindly patronage attend the proletarian festival on Cotton Day, at Past Domorsky, the experimental cotton region. She gives a multitude of case histories, illustrating the painful passage from old customs to new methods, with, it is true, frequent shortcomings and backslidings. It is needless to say that Miss Strong writes with enthusiasm for her theme, but she is a trained observer, and the careful checking of her results is evident. Whether we regard the Soviet experiment as a hope or a menace, it is clear that her account of its progress in this remote part of the world must be received with attention.

One fact to be noted is that the revolution had a certain indigenous growth in this region. The people revolted against the War, and the Tsar's authority crumbled here as in Moscow. There followed a period of confusion in which the revolutionists were slaughtered by Kerensky and betrayed to Kolchak, but the movement went on. In spite of the clergy, the effort of Enver Bey to establish a Mohammedan front and initiate a Holy War went for nothing. Then the Soviet government took control and the region was divided into two republics, the Uzbeks and the Turcomans, who, in spite of being "backward races," are on constitutional equality with the Russians and Ukrainians in the Soviet Union. Miss Strong explains this prestige on the ground of the economic and strategic importance of Central Asia. Economically, the region finds its chief value in cotton, which has been grown since the Middle Ages under a rude system of irrigation introduced by the Arabs. Through the control of water by modern engineering, the dispossession of landlords in favor of farm workers, the organization of the latter into coöperatives, the introduction of agricultural machinery and of tested seed from the experimental station, production has enormously increased. It is frankly the aim of the Soviet government to make Russia independent of the American cotton crop. Here the competition of dictatorship, with its power of conscription and enforcement of expert control, with democracy and its reliance on private enterprise, will come to a clear issue.

In the fields of political and economic method the people seem to have lent themselves to guidance with extraordinary docility. It is true, the landowner, nominally dispossessed, often persists by prestige or legal subterfuge in exercising a feudal right over his former serfs, and prominent individuals, elected to office, continue to practise traditional Oriental tyranny and graft under the forms of Communism, or as judges, to administer very personal justice. Miss Strong gives amusing instances of these anomalies which are sometimes simply due to the psychological confusion incident to this meeting of East and West. Such confusion is happily illustrated by a letter from an assistant prosecutor to his chief:

> Most Precious Comrade:
>
> Together with all your low subjects I beg of you in a speedy answer to assure me of your precious health and of the success of your honorable affairs. I, your obedient servant, every night raise my prayers to the Almighty Lord God, and with ceaseless petitions ask from the Highest health upon you and your family. May he give you many children so that under the ever continued rule of yourself and our dear Communist Party we may await years of old age in the successful building of Socialism.
>
> All is of God. May he preserve your days to the delight of your children. Amen! With sincere red-candidate greetings, Alla Shukarov.

In the field of domestic custom, the reformation was more

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difficult. Two things the government undertook to do in the interest of its women subjects—to abolish the *kalym*, or purchase price of girls in marriage, and to free women from the *paranja*, or veil. As to the first, the law handed down from Moscow was constantly evaded, and gave rise to many complicated trials, for the "assistant judges" (who are the jury in Russian court procedure) naturally saw nothing wrong in the ancient custom, and were opposed to sumptuary legislation. In the matter of the veil, it was necessary for women themselves to take the initiative. The Women's Section of the Communist party managed the campaign. Through pressure by the government, its employees were led to permit their wives to unveil. Trade unions followed. Physicians declared the veil a menace to health. A few pioneers offered themselves as martyrs. Public opinion was against them, as it was against the protagonists of dress reform and suffrage in the West, and husbands, brothers and mobs put them to death. The authorities brought the murderers into court, and secured convictions and extreme penalties. In this connection Miss Strong comments on the device of the Soviet government of using trials for education, and staging court scenes for propaganda. In the end, in spite of the opposition of the religious leaders, public opinion wavered and broke. The great triumph of woman in Asia came at the mass unveiling of the women of Bokhara, the very center of Mohammedan influence, in March, 1928.

Altogether, Miss Strong's book has an interest and fascination which the innumerable accounts of the Russia written from Moscow or the Volga often lack. In her pages the hard outlines of a mechanical and material civilization are softened by the atmosphere of the ancient summer of the world. And the importance of her testimony, granting that it is colored by her historical imagination and personal sympathy, is beyond question. The Soviets have driven a wedge of Socialism into the heart of the greatest continent. In view of the results, political, economic and moral, it is not rash to guess that the success of the Communist experiment will be determined, not on the frontiers of Poland, still less in London or Washington, but on the steppes of Turkestan.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

The Twilight of Christianity

The Twilight of Christianity, by Harry Elmer Barnes. New York: The Vanguard Press. 470 pages. $3.

"THE TWILIGHT OF CHRISTIANITY," by Professor Harry Elmer Barnes, is the logical result of his famous paper, read last Christmas before the Science Association—the paper which caused, at the time, such a flutter in religious camps. In the present volume, Professor Barnes has expanded and weighted his views on the contemporary religious situation.

The central thesis is easily stated. The religious creeds of 95 percent of present-day Americans are survivals from an outgrown and outdated past, the expression of supernaturalism with its anthropomorphic God, its Revelation, its Fall of Man, its vicarious Savior, its immortality of the soul, and the like; all of which are not only unprovable, but are even disprovable by the astronomer, the anthropologist, the physicist, the psychologist and their brethren. These religious myths are manifestly illusions in fact; but are in their various ways social liabilities in their by-products, as, for example, in the Catholic opposition to birth-control, in the Protestant attitude toward sex and the joys of life, and in a thousand other ways—liabilities to such an extent, as Dr. Barnes points out, that a rational and wisely ordered society is by them hindered or made impossible. The struggle is on between reason and superstition, between science and false stereotypes; and the struggle is one to the death. Christianity, as Dr. Barnes uses the term, is the symbol of supernaturalism and the enemy of right thinking and action; and the "Twilight of Christianity" is the hope of the world as anticipating a new morning of a secularized, humanistic and realistic religion which it is the aim of the present book to hasten.

The volume is for the most part destructive in its criticism, with long chapters exposing the futility of the belief in the Bible as the inspired word of God and of the slender claims of Jesus as an historical figure—in the light of the findings of the higher criticism; exposing the unreality of the anthropomorphic conception of God the Father—in the light of the findings of astronomy and physics; exposing the nature and growth of religion—in the light of the findings of anthropology and psychology; and so on. Indeed, the book as a whole is largely a summary of the latest discoveries of science in all its aspects, brought to bear upon religious creeds and dogmas. The well-read man will find a good deal in the book not new to him; but by its focusing and arrangement it is stimulating. Perhaps the most original parts are those in which the author discusses specially the actual obstructions to free thought and intelligent action which religious obscurantism sets up.

The constructive part of the book, as is inevitable, is less convincing. The "secular social religion" of the future which shall make impressive and potent love, justice, beauty, seems a little thin and unsatisfying to those, at least, who have found some of the older faiths emotionally comforting. Indeed, the reliance on reason or science is so complete that the emotional attitude of man seems proportionately neglected; and in his battle for reason, Dr. Barnes gives the impression of slighting what the psychologists fully recognize, the importance of emotion. All intelligent persons must accept the general conclusions that an harmonious life, individual and collective, demands the knowledge and adoption of the discoveries of science; but the religion of the future, the new humanism, must develop an imaginative warmth in the search for human perfection which science cannot give. I am sure that Dr. Barnes would be the first to admit this fact, and that the book only gives the opposite impression because it is concerned with the other, and for him the more immediate, need for knowledge and reason in the conduct of human life. There are, moreover, a few places where the reader suspects Dr. Barnes of being too confident about the complete finality of scientific findings at their present stage; the conclusions of psychology, for example, in regard to, let us say, religion itself as a human necessity, or in regard to the freedom of the will. And one could wish that there had been a sharper line drawn between "religion" as an enduring attribute or need of the individual, and the organized or institutional religion with its dogmas and taboos, which after all is the game he is really after.

In style and purpose the book is bold and vigorous. The amazing knowledge of the literature of the field covered—*field* is too small a word; let me say *prairie*, rather—even to the books just off the press; the aptness of the citations; the orderly mustering of vast material—all these are admirable. "The Twilight of Christianity" is a book to be read by anyone concerned with the problems of religion and social progress.

HORACE AINSWORTH EATON.

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Doughty: Private Man

The Life of Charles M. Doughty, by D. G. Hogarth. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 216 pages. $5.

It would have been impossible for anyone to make a more penetrating comment on the life of Charles M. Doughty than he himself did in his own letter to Mr. Hogarth, when he wrote, "I am a private man." He was a private man, and the Arabian journey was a very private affair. Wisely, Mr. Hogarth, as he explains in his preface, has not attempted to treat all of Doughty's long life on the same scale which he employs in the treatment of the Arabian years. For Doughty lived to be eighty-two, but the main adventure of his career was over when he was a bare thirty-five. Thereafter he moved forever in the shadow of his immense accomplishment.

Doughty's first years held no promise of anything but the routine of an English country gentleman. He was the son of a well-to-do clergyman whose family had been squires and parsons in Suffolk for two hundred and fifty years, and who had scarcely moved off their ancestral acres in the course of that time. His mother, however, came of Navy people, and when he was left an orphan at the age of six, he was thoroughly inculcated with the family tradition by the maternal aunt who watched over his school days. But his ambition was not to be attained, for he failed the rigid naval medical examination and in 1861 somewhat grudgingly entered Caius College, Cambridge. It was here that he first evinced that singular and obstinate dislike of authority which became so typical of him. He rebelled against the Caius regulations and migrated to Downing College, where he was less hampered, only to return to the former college before he took his degree.

Doughty's interest in geology and the kindred sciences had been awakened after he found the Navy closed to him, and as early as 1862 he presented a paper at a meeting of the British Association. At Cambridge he devoted himself to this work, and during a long holiday made an exhaustive survey of phenomena in Norway. Much of his research was done in solitude, and in the lonely Norwegian valleys or the quiet fastness of his Cambridge rooms the habit of his privacy was confirmed. At the same time he brooded much on the early annals of his race and became imbued with an exalted patriotism. He determined to celebrate his country in verse and resolved that his vehicle should be English of the purest and most undefiled quality. Years of preparation would be necessary, he felt, before he could obtain the proper proficiency, and so he set forth to study and to see the world. He sojourned in Norway, in Holland, in southern Europe, and finally he touched upon the edge of Arabia. At the time he certainly did not anticipate that his Arabian studies would give him lasting fame, while the rest of his work would rest in semi-obscurity. Years later, he wrote that he regarded these studies as a not wholly welcome life-day's interruption.

Still, who can doubt that Arabia lured him on? He had already had a taste of desert hardship in the Sinai and in North Africa when he began his fateful journey on the tenth of November, 1876. The tangible result of those two years was the monumental work called "Arabia Deserta." It would be vain within a short space to touch on this book, beyond saying that it is the most complete work on Arabia that has ever been written. Those who wish to understand Doughty must read it, and in that stupendous record of scientific research, incredible hardships, and devotion to an ideal, become acquainted with this private man. In his unparalleled experience he had learned something which he could not tell, a secret which perhaps only Arabia can impart. Henceforth there was evident in his life and in his writing a struggle to express that great thing of which he was possessed. He was like a man who has starved himself until his mind becomes acutely clear and yet who cannot quite make those about him see what he has seen. The Arabian years were more than a life-day's interruption. They were the main years of his life, just as Melville's short time at sea became magnified into the chief episode of his existence.

His travels had sharpened his desire to write a patriotic epic, but it was not until 1903, nearly fifteen years after the publication of "Arabia Deserta," that "The Dawn in Britain" was finished. Then at intervals of a few years appeared "Adam Cast Forth," "The Cliffs," "The Clouds" and other poems. Age and a life of what might be termed active contemplation had given Doughty a prophetic quality and he saw great danger to his country in the war-like preparations of Europe. Gradually he had become a well-known figure in the literary and scientific world, but he himself was always apart from it. The vicissitudes of a long life left him what he had always wished to remain—a private man.

The two Hogarths, the elder who wrote this book, and the son who revised and completed it after his father's death, understood this well. They have not tried to do too much: their book might correctly have been called a memoir, rather than a life. They have put down in dignified and readable English all there is to know; of that inner world in which the soul of Charles Doughty dwelt they have not attempted to write, for, like the Arabia which he discovered alone, it was a private place.

NEILSON ABEEL.

The Friendly Smile

The Good Companions, by J. B. Priestley. New York: Harper and Brothers. $3.

THE career of J. B. Priestley is one of the minor tragedies of contemporary English literature. A few years ago, Mr. Priestley was a competent—if not inspired—critic: his biography of Meredith in the "English Men of Letters" series is an example of pleasant, intelligent, scholarly writing. Shortly after this, Mr. Priestley took to writing genial and pretty personal essays on how he fixed the card table, how he felt when he bought a pair of crimson silk pajamas, what his sensations were when he called on the vicar. Somehow even these did not prepare one for the worst; ominous as they now appear in retrospect, at the time they seemed to have a substratum of common sense and restraint, a saving grace of literary expression.

Not content with such a petty vehicle as the essay, however, Mr. Priestley decided to become a novelist. Aided and abetted in one instance by Hugh Walpole, he produced three novels with an almost Oppenheimesque rapidity—novels full of whimsy, sentimentality and humor gone slightly bad. After this, he could no longer bear to confine himself to a novel of ordinary length; in "The Good Companions" he prattles along for well over six hundred pages in a vein of robust good cheer and offensively high spirits. In his younger and more temperate days, Mr. Priestley criticized Meredith's letters as being "too obviously lacking in the essential qualities of sympathy and charm, the friendly smile looking out of the page. . . ." In "The Good Companions," the author fairly exudes sympathy for

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all his characters, the characters ooze charm at every pore, and friendly smiles, not to say insane guffaws, lurk in every paragraph.

The characters consist primarily of Mr. Oakroyd, a quaint old Yorkshire laborer who speaks in dialect and never did anyone any harm; Miss Trant, a maiden lady out for a lark, and Inigo Jollifant, who's just a madcap. For one reason or another, these three leave their homes on the same day, take to the open road, and by a series of remarkable but not particularly happy coincidences, fall in with one another. They proceed to become involved with a traveling theatrical troupe, and, in an ecstasy of good feeling and silliness, decide to call themselves "The Good Companions." As such, financed by Miss Trant, to whom all this is just a perfectly devilish lark, they have their adventures and misadventures, the alarming features of the latter always being counteracted by the knowledge that as long as Captain Priestley is at the helm no one will come to any real harm.

Mr. Priestley capitalizes his opportunity to compare persons of varying social strata who are thrown in with one another, but I still prefer "The Canterbury Tales." There is nothing more depressing than a sustained atmosphere of jollity. Moreover, a little sentimentality goes a long way; "The Good Companions" fairly drips with it. The author has consciously written in the tradition of Dickens; but he has outdone himself; compared with him, the Victorians seem positively psychological.

GEOFFREY T. HELLMAN.

American Prose

Style and Form in American Prose, by Gorham B. Munson. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 311 pages. $3.50.

MR. MUNSON, in analyzing American style, treats a subject which has far more significance and interest than would at first appear. "Throughout this volume," he says at the beginning of his book, "we shall try to discover if style is related to personality. And form . . . will also be experimentally treated as behavior. We shall try to relate it to the submerged biological base of the writer, to find it in correspondence with his world view, of which, by the way, the writer may be so unconscious that instead of busying himself with its articulation he is being continually given away by it."

Now this is a very interesting attempt, and the writers whom Mr. Munson chooses for analysis—Poe, T. S. Eliot, Emerson, William James, Santayana, Melville, Crane, etc. —appear on the whole to offer likely material. Unfortunately, however, though there are many interesting remarks, and some wise ones (of a fairly rudimentary nature), the aim of the book does not seem to have been fulfilled. Merely as a discussion of style, the "English Prose Style" of Herbert Read, which was published last year, and to which Mr. Munson unhappily never refers, is far more thorough and acute. And when it comes to discussing the personalities and the "world view" of the various authors under consideration, Mr. Munson seems usually to slide over the point; his grasp slips, and with the exception of a few rather emotive generalities, we come away little wiser than before.

The difficulty is, of course, that the study of the relation of an author's style to his "submerged biological base" would far outstrip the limits of a book of 311 pages. From one angle, style is the final test of a civilization; it is a

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kind of cultural barometer; it reflects personality, and a culture or a civilization is to be judged by its individual personalities. Hence an analysis of American prose style is, or in the long run should be, an analysis of American civilization, and one of the reasons for the weakness of Mr. Munson's book is that while he seems to be aware of this fact, he does not carry it to its proper conclusion. He is merely descriptive; his critical principles, many of them borrowed from A. R. Orage, are not applied with sufficient concentration, nor are they deeply enough ingrained in Mr. Munson's thought to give the necessary impression of finality.

A harsh reader, therefore, might be inclined to turn Mr. Munson's own words against himself: "Strong doubts of the progress of American prose must come to anyone who spends a few weeks in critical contemplation of what we have so far accumulated. . . . Beyond caviling, American prose style today shows all the symptoms of decline." And while this would not be entirely fair (as I have said, there are a number of good things in Mr. Munson's book), nevertheless there is some justice in it. For the faults of the book are exactly those evidences of decline to which Mr. Munson refers. America's lack of external rivals or forces to limit and confine her energies, the spread of universal education, the dissipation of interest produced by the elective system (perhaps President Eliot of Harvard is more to blame than anyone else for the decline of American prose style), the pumping up of blatant superficial emotions in terms of deep important emotions—all these things result in that lack of sufficient concentration, of ingrained conviction wrung from profound experience, which makes American personality, and consequently American style, so glib or lively on the surface, and so hollow underneath. Our vital intensity is spread thin, like a pat of butter over a piece of bread too big for it, and as a result the personalities we generate, and the style they reflect, "show all the symptoms of decline."

The situation is not, one hopes, irremediable. Indeed, one of the first steps toward remedying it is to call as much attention to it as possible. But that this could be done better than in almost any other way by a full discussion of American prose style, is a fact which Mr. Munson seems only dimly to have realized. One hopes that his lack of success will not discourage others from attempting it.

THEODORE SPENCER.

Notes on Novels

Last Nights of Paris, by Philippe Soupault. Translated by William Carlos Williams. New York: The Macaulay Company. $2.50.

PHILIPPE Soupault, poet and storm center of the Dada movement, has given us a novel of extraordinary power and fascination. Although he may not be directly concerned with the fortunes of the *Surréalistes,* now active in Paris, this novel is an excellent example of the potentialities of the group. With the materials usually seized upon for the construction of the average murder-mystery-detective story, M. Soupault has created something that approaches a profund criticism of his intensely urban civilization, contemporary Paris. The entire work is charged with internal and muffled revolt against the machinery of modern society. Georgette, a prostitute, is the central figure in the story that discloses the complex organism existing within a Parisian underworld. Georgette herself, although she functions as the very heart of a gang

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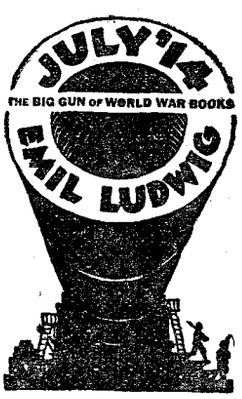

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of criminals bent upon the exploitation and ultimate destruction of Parisian society, has no other ambition than to be a neat little bourgeoise settled peacefully in suburban quietude. She is at once the symbol of bourgeois security and the extreme of social corruption. She is at once the tool of Volpe, the master mind of her gang, and ruler of his subterranean universe. By association she is concerned with a complete range of sexual perversions, wholesale murders and political chicanery, yet, as always, she remains sane, practical, fully aware of her obligations to a world of respectability. William Carlos Williams has effected an admirable translation of Soupault's prose, displaying to its full advantage the alternation of calm realism and brilliant poetic intensity at work throughout the progress of the narrative.

H. G.

Short Stories Out of Soviet Russia. Compiled and translated by John Cournos. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

THOUGH this volume does not introduce any striking new writers or tendencies in Soviet fiction, it does include work by some of the best of the younger Russians. Babel, Ivanov, Sergeev-Tzensky, Pilniak, Zozulya and others are represented in a collection that is characteristically post-Revolution in tone and yet one in which we have no difficulty in recognizing the tradition of Dostoievsky and Tolstoy. All of the stories are, beneath their modern distortion and formal combinations, fundamentally human, and provide in some degree a human satisfaction. Though one of them—"The Human Wind," by Pilniak—uses an expressionistic technique and is somewhat experimental, we find here none of the exaggerated preoccupation with esthetic abstractions which has characterized so much young writing since the War. "Death of Dolgushov," "Salt" and "The Letter" well represent Babel's powerful and concentrated creation. Ivanov's "The Child" (printed long ago in Broom) is primitive, barbaric in the extreme, thoroughly human at the core. It would be hard to find a more unflinching, and less "unpleasant" treatment of brutality than "The Man You Couldn't Kill," by Sergeev-Tzensky. Leonov's "Ivan's Misadventure" is a fine story of rather pre-War flavor, and in "A Tale About Ak and Humanity," by Zozulya, we have a refreshing fragment of contemporary satire.

C. S.

Contributors

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